The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXV NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1931 NUMBER 844

Contents

The Week 309

Editorials

Four Aspects of the Wickersham Report 211
A Bad Omen for Railroad Consolidation 213

General Articles

Can Indians Govern India? ..... H. N. Brailsford 315
"All I Want Is Work" ..... Louis Stark 317
Leaving the Petate ..... Katherine Anne Porter 318
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 321
Painting, Opera and Theater ..... Edmund Wilson 322
The Position of the Progressive:
I. Americanize America! ..... Robert Hallowell 324
II. Boring from Within ..... Kenneth Burke 326

Correspondence 329

Reviews of Books

Gerard Manley Hopkins ..... Hildegarde Flanner 331
College Sons—and Parents ..... John Dewey 332
Whistler and His Friends ..... Geoffrey T. Hellman 333
The Chinese Dilemma ..... Isidor Schneider 334
Book Notes 334

The Week

THE release of Gandhi and the other members of the Working Committee of the Indian Nationalist Congress is an act not of justice, but of expediency. Unless the tentative agreement reached by the Round Table Conference in London is accepted by the Gandhi group, the present deadlock must continue; and the Gandhists could hardly arrive at a decision while their leaders were locked up and prevented from conferring. Only the leaders have been set free; of almost 60,000 Indians who have been political prisoners in the last few months, 23,503 are still behind the bars, according to an official statement of the government of India this week. It is a momentous decision which the Nationalists must now make: whether they will take half a loaf while continuing to struggle for the other half, or will remain intransigent and continue their campaign of civil disobedience. One difficulty has been cleared away: both the Conservative and the Liberal leaders in Great Britain have indicated their support of the program which has emerged from the Round Table Conference. In the debate in Parliament, only the egregious Winston Churchill raised his voice in favor of the policy of the mailed fist.

THE largest bank failure in the history of the country, that of the Bank of United States in New York City, an institution with fifty-nine branches and nearly four hundred thousand depositors, is one that should be investigated thoroughly and impartially. It is not alone the size of the failure that makes it important: it is the fact that, given the most elementary adherence to sound banking principles, it was totally unnecessary. An investigation ought to reveal items of interest to the whole country: why it is, for example, that American banks often fail when their assets are not seriously impaired, and why British observers claim that the financial recovery of the United States—and of the world—is being delayed by our unsound banking practices, and the extent to which crooked banking is allied with crooked politics. That such an investigation can be conducted by Max D. Steuer, recently appointed as assistant district attorney in charge of the case, is a ridiculous assumption. Mr. Steuer is one of the ablest trial lawyers in the country, but he is also one of those most closely connected with Tammany Hall. He is "out to get" the officers of the bank, while preserving to the best of his ability the system that produced them. Finally, he is a personal enemy of Isidor J. Kresel, one of the directors, who once attempted to have Mr. Steuer disbarred. Mr. Kresel is at present conducting, with great vigor, that investigation into the lower courts which is causing such grief to Tammany judges, district leaders and detectives. If his personal integrity can be brought into question, the attack on Tammany will be crippled and Mr. Steuer will score a personal triumph at the expense of honest banking—and honest courts.

THE five Governors of the industrial states who have been meeting at the invitation of Governor Roosevelt of New York would do well to heed the experts who have placed before them the arguments for unemployment insurance. There appears to be a danger that they will delay until "a more favorable time" any approval for this proposal. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history of unemployment in this country shows that permanent measures advocated during depressions are promptly forgotten when revival comes. Unless action is taken while public attention is directed toward the problem, it is never taken. And there is no reason for delay. Further investigation is unnecessary. The American experts have been studying the question for years; they are possessed of full information concerning the operation of unemployment insurance in other countries and of the experiments under non-governmental auspices here. While it would be well if all these states could agree to act simultaneously, there is no reason why one or more of them should fear to take the lead if the others do not follow. The compulsory insurance law favored by the experts called together by the American Association for Labor Legislation requires a contribution of only one percent of the pay roll from employers. This would be negligible in its effect on the cost of production; in no case would it increase total costs more than one-half of one percent. The time for action is here; if, with the example of the present distress before their eyes, the politicians fail to act, their cowardice will be beneath contempt.

THE League of Nations has learned a trick from President Hoover. Having appointed one expert commission to investigate conditions in Liberia, it now proposes to set up another to reform the conditions discovered by the first. The United States will be invited to become a member of the new body, and will probably accept. It is to be hoped that if we do, we shall also carry out the rest of the program proposed by Dr. R. L. Buell of the Foreign Policy Association, who suggested such cooperation with the League in a recent article in The Christian Science Monitor. Dr. Buell urged that the United States surrender its present financial control, and that the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company modify its concession, which gives it the virtual power to dictate the form and amount of outside aid received. If these two things are not done, the League will not be able to act effectively.

HOW urgent is the need for assistance, the report of the International Commission of Inquiry makes painfully clear. It finds that Vice President Yancy and other Negro officials have sold natives of Liberia into the service of the Spanish planters of Fernando Po. The Liberian government has also compelled hundreds of others to labor on an ill advised program of road building, sometimes for as long as nine months at a time, and invariably without pay. When chiefs have not provided the required number of men, they have been "systematically humiliated, degraded and robbed of their power." Native women, similarly conscripted, have been shamefully abused by the native soldiers while some of the men have been subjected to cruel torture. Referring to the Firestone enterprise, the report declares that "the precipitous character of the company's pioneering operations in Liberia, the unfamiliarity of its employees with African conditions, the unsuitableness of its equipment and outfit, and the inexperience in the control of primitive labor all created difficulties. . . ." Until the end of 1927, Mr. Firestone received parts of his labor from the government to which he paid recruiting fees, and this labor was obtained by the same brutal methods employed elsewhere.

THE Commission's report not only discredits President King, who has been forced to resign, but also the past policy of the American State Department. Since 1847, Liberia has been under the virtual protection of the United States; and our control was increased by the Firestone agreements of 1926, which not only gave the rubber company a million-acre concession, but authorized the United States to select seven American officials for the Liberian government. Despite this special relationship, slavery has flourished. It is interesting to remember that when Dr. Buell revealed conditions there, in 1928, he was roundly abused by Acting Secretary Castle and by Mr. Firestone. Confronted by the present report of the International Committee, the State Department professes to be "profoundly shocked." Its moral indignation would be more impressive if it had come a little earlier.

THE investigation of the magistrates' courts in New York City is producing a curious effect on the health of individual magistrates. One after another they are finding that the winter air of New York is bad for their lungs and nerves; that Florida is to be recommended for its mild breezes and its freedom from subpoenas. A few members of the vice squad are also taking health cures—not in Florida, this time, but in those remote boroughs where pounding the pavements is an infallible cure for swollen waistlines and swelling bank accounts. One of them, a former plain-clothes man named Robert E. Morris, recently testified that his "Uncle George," who was engaged in some sort of business somewhere in New Jersey, met him one day at Coney Island and gave him $40,000 in thousand-dollar bills—later conveniently dying "somewhere near Los Angeles." But even more fabulous than the story of Uncle George is the reaction of the higher New York City officials to Mr. Kresel's investigation. They are not disturbed by the fact that women of the highest moral character have been sent to jail for committing no crime whatever. They are not disturbed by the use of pimps as informers, by the accepting of bribes by vice-squad men and court officials, by the venality of magistrates, by the general inhumanity of the system. Disregarding all human values, they seem to be disturbed by the threat to the continuance of the system itself.

THE recommendation of the Interstate Commerce Commission to Congress that the recapture clause

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the Transportation Act be repealed is really part of a plan to make the valuation section of the Act workable. As long as the more profitable roads must surrender half of everything they earn over a "reasonable return" on their "value," they will fight in the courts with every resource to push that value as high as possible. It was such an effort that produced the O'Fallon decision, which threw valuation and rate regulation into confusion. Then, too, the profits recaptured by the government do not serve the purpose intended by the law; they were supposed to be lent at nominal rates to roads needing credit, but they have not been so used; the "weak" roads usually do not need credit so much as they need a writing down of their overcapitalization. Consolidations are likely to absorb most of these roads, in any case. With recapture out of the way, the Commission may be able to follow its chosen plan of making a valuation of each road only once, and then keeping it up to date by a mere accounting record of additions and betterments—the only practicable method, but one which could not be followed if the valuation had always to be based on spot reproduction cost. This, with more flexibility in the rate of return, which would allow roads to accumulate reserves in good times to help them through depressions, would greatly facilitate regulation.

LOOKING over the annual report of the Federal Trade Commission, we find on page 34 the statement that of all the electrical energy produced in the United States in 1929, 15.1 percent was exported from the states in which it was generated, and of all that consumed, 19.65 percent came from states outside those in which it was used. Even if deductions are made for power coming back into the states of origin after crossing state lines, these figures are not greatly reduced. What does this fact do to the contention of the administration that state regulation of rates is sufficient? A speech by Mr. Hoover in October, 1925, quoted by Felix Frankfurter in The New Republic of October 17, 1928, declared that the importance of interstate power had been greatly exaggerated, the fact being that "at the present time less than 4 percent of the power developed passes state lines." Mr. Frankfurter pointed out that in 1926 the interstate transmission of power amounted to 9.06 percent. Even if Mr. Hoover was not guilty of underestimation at the time of his speech, interstate transmission of power is clearly growing by such leaps and bounds that on this count alone he must, if he gives candid attention to the matter, revise his former opinion as to the need for federal regulation.

THOUGH most people do not know it, there is now a virtual embargo on shipments of Russian goods to the United States. It exists, not through congressional action, but through the autocratic misuse of the Treasury Department's power to regulate imports. Assistant Secretary Seymour Lowman, who shares the hysteria of Hamilton Fish, has been the instigator of the new regulations which put upon the American importer the burden of proof that goods from Russia were not produced by convict or forced labor. At any time, a shipment from Russia, even an entire cargo, may be impounded and held indefinitely, waiting the presentation of evidence that it was produced by free labor. How is the importer to obtain such evidence? The Treasury does not consider the word of the Soviet government good, and the State Department refuses to permit agents of our government to go into Russia to investigate, because we have no diplomatic relations with the U. S. S. R. Colonel Hugh L. Cooper, president of the American-Russian Chamber of Commerce, speaking on behalf of sixteen companies, all of which import from Russia on a large scale, declares that in the few weeks since the regulations went into effect, trade has been disrupted. Important contracts are being violated because neither side dares run the risks which are now involved. Here is law making by the executive branch of the American government, with a vengeance.

THE smothered revolution in Cuba goes on. If it were not for the fear of intervention by the United States in support of his tyrannical dictatorship, Machado would have been deposed long ago; and even as it is, he may find it impossible to maintain his position much longer. The constitutional guarantees continue to be suspended, always a sign of weakness; despite a court decision that his suppression of the press is illegal, Machado does not dare permit hostile newsppers to appear. The National Legislature is a mere tool of his dictatorship, which automatically gives him the legislation he asks, no matter how outrageous. The American government recently, and very sensibly, permitted a revolution to take place in Panama; it could not do better than to abandon its present misinterpretation of the Platt Amendment, and follow the same course in Cuba.

Four Aspects of the Wickersham Report

THE Wickersham Commission's huge report—90,000 words at a cost to the taxpayers of a little more than $5 a word—raises numerous and complicated questions. A few of these, more important than the rest, we shall discuss separately.

Inconsistencies.—As soon as the report was published, it became apparent that there were grave disagreements between the text of the report and the brief summary which accompanies it, between both of these and President Hoover's description of its contents in his message to Congress, between his own attitude as stated in that message and as he set it forth in unofficial discussions with a few news-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

paper men twenty-four hours later, after the press of the country had sharply criticized the position he was supposed to have taken. The report itself is an intelligent analysis of the history of prohibition and the failure of enforcement. It disproves many of the assumptions of the Drys so overwhelmingly that if they will read the document, and if their minds are open to the logic of evidence, they cannot maintain their position except by changing their premises. The summary, which is the only thing, no doubt, that most people will read, makes the report seem much more favorable to prohibition than is in fact the case. The summary says that the Commission is opposed to having the government go into the liquor business, though actually the majority of its members, as individuals, are in favor of such a proposal unless there comes such a change in the public attitude toward enforcement as no sensible person can believe is conceivable. The summary says that enforcement is at present inadequate, and conveys the impression that if it is bettered, law breaking may be so reduced as to make possible a continuance of prohibition; but the report itself clearly shows that the members of the Commission believe more men and money for enforcement will be useless without a change in public opinion which can only be brought about by other means. The first sentence of the conclusions is that "the Commission is opposed to repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment," and these words got into all the newspaper headlines. But in fact, a majority of the Commissioners are in favor, under one set of conditions or another, of such revision as would destroy the present Amendment and permit the legal sale of liquor throughout the country. What is the difference between revision and repeal, if revision would bring what the advocates of repeal demand?

Mr. Hoover's message to Congress is even farther from the spirit of the report than is the summary. He represents the Commission as believing that enforcement is now rapidly getting better, with the inference that it will soon be satisfactory; no such deduction can legitimately be drawn from the report itself. He interprets as a call to arms the Commission's observation that the coöperation of the states is necessary for successful enforcement, ignoring the obvious fact that the Commission does not expect any such coöperation.

The report and presidential politics.—There have been persistent rumors in Washington that pressure was brought to bear on the Commissioners to make their report more favorable to prohibition than their independent judgment would have caused them to do. Specifically it has been charged that the last few weeks of delay in making its text public were the result of efforts by Mr. Hoover to bring this about, and that the misleading summary was hastily rewritten at the last minute. There is internal evidence of remarkable confusion, several of the individual reports by members of the Commission apparently having been written under the impression that the main document demands revision of the Eighteenth Amendment in much more concrete terms than it actually does. The Commission has officially denied that any last-minute pressure was exerted, and for the present the public must rest content with this denial. A congressional investigation of these charges has been asked, however, and Mr. Hoover and the members of the Commission ought to be the first to welcome it, in order to set the rumors at rest once and for all.

It is impossible to dissociate the President's message to Congress, and his subsequent unofficial interpretations of it, from political considerations looking toward 1932. We believe our Washington correspondent is correct when he says, in this issue, that Mr. Hoover, by tying himself so closely to the prohibitionists, has increased the probability that he will be the Republican nominee, even though he may have decreased the probability of victory in the election. If it is true that by his unofficial interpretation of his stand he is trying to carry water on both shoulders, we think it is inevitable that he will be forced to abandon this effort during the year and a half before the nominating convention. We believe that eventually he will have to declare himself Dry, or to advocate such a long further period of trial that the Wets will consider him their enemy. In that case, if the Democrats make themselves frankly anti-prohibition, and if the industrial depression remains even moderately severe, we believe there is a good chance that the Republicans will be defeated.

The report and prohibition.—Despite its confusion and inconsistencies, the report as a whole is undoubtedly the heaviest blow prohibition has ever experienced. The picture it presents of the breakdown of enforcement is reënforced by such an array of facts as cannot be ignored by any Dry except those in the lunatic fringe. The concrete proposals for better enforcement are wholly inadequate and the report frankly recognizes this fact, admitting that the only hope is a change of heart in the country as a whole. Certain of the suggestions, such as the proposal for removing the restrictions on doctors' prescriptions, will make for more drinking and not for less. In regard to home manufacture of wine, the Commissioners not only say frankly that the government is condoning nullification on a nation-wide scale, but they clearly indicate their belief that the situation is beyond control. They admit that the great part of the liquor consumed, from whatever source, is of good quality. They agree that "enforcement is not reaching the sources of production and distribution so as materially to affect the supply." No propagandist for the Wets has ever gone any farther than this. In short, the factual material in the report is such as to put the prohibitionists on the defensive as they have never been.

The report and the reputation of the Commissioners.—Only one of the eleven members of the Commission comes out of the fray with his reputa-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion undamaged—Monte M. Lemann, of New Orleans, who refused to sign a report with whose conclusions he was not in agreement. Every other member made this compromise, although it was clear from their individual comments that not one of them, including those most rigidly in favor of prohibition, could have endorsed the final version in toto. The obvious and honorable thing, it would seem, would have been for them to publish their factual material and let each man propose his own solution separately, without in addition trying to force them into a temporary and unreal agreement upon a set of conclusions which is contradicted both by the admitted facts and by adding up the individual reports. The country will never abandon the belief that the conclusions were dictated by political pressure, and that this came, directly or indirectly, from Mr. Hoover. This pressure need not have been explicit, and in that sense the technical denial may be justified; but the Commissioners knew the President's frame of mind, and there is every evidence that most of them did violence to their consciences in the endeavor to submit a document which would have his approval.

The future of fact-finding commissions.—Mr. Hoover's chief theoretical contribution to the science of government has been the appointment of expert commissions to investigate vexed problems and recommend procedure based upon their superior information. We have several times expressed in these pages the fear that Mr. Hoover was discrediting his own method, by selecting "experts" who do not deserve that description, by bringing pressure to bear upon them, and by misusing their results for political purposes. We submit that the Wickersham Commission is a shocking example of such treatment. Almost from the beginning, eighteen months ago, every informed person in Washington has known that the Commission was not working in an atmosphere of science but in one of politics. It has been unwilling to face the facts which its own investigators produced for it, and Mr. Hoover has gone even farther in the same direction. After this experience, if the President should ever propose another commission to investigate anything whatever, a roar of laughter would go up from one end of the country to the other. Yet the tragic fact is that never before in our history were expert judgments and informed proposals so needed as now.

Disappointing as is the Wickersham report, it has served a useful purpose. It marks the close of an era of official indifference to the appalling conditions created by the "experiment noble in purpose." Through the report runs the double thought of a further fixed period of trial and of a national referendum, now or later. Either proposal, if honestly accepted, would in our judgment sound the death knell of this colossal attempt to bring about temperance by the worst possible means. In any case, the Wickersham report marks the beginning of the end.

A Bad Omen for Railroad Consolidation

IN HIS statement questioning the wisdom of the new plan for railroad consolidation of the great Eastern trunk lines, Senator Couzens said it was uncertain whether this plan was really for the benefit of the public or for the benefit of dominant financial interests. A side light of some importance has been thrown on this question by the decision of the United States Supreme Court on the receivership of the old Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway Company.

The question before the Court was, as stated by Justice Stone in the minority opinion, "whether the salutary provisions" of the Interstate Commerce Act can be avoided. Can "an issue of securities to defray excessive reorganization expenses" be withdrawn from the control of the Interstate Commerce Commission? The conservative majority decided that the bankers' lawyers in the St. Paul case had, by the drafting of their documents, effectively deprived the Commission of a regulatory control which it had exercised in previous cases. In one of these, the reorganization of the "Katy" road, the Commission cut down the fees of the very lawyers who acted in the St. Paul affair. As a result of the majority decision, the reorganization managers, Kuhn Loeb and the National City Company, will receive over a million dollars, and six Wall Street law firms an amount estimated by one of the managers at anywhere from two-thirds of a million to a million.

The minority opinion, representing the views of Justices Stone, Holmes and Brandeis, characterizes the methods by which the bankers and lawyers were able to get these fees without Commission regulation as a "failure to conform to those elementary standards of fairness and good conscience which equity may always demand." The reorganization plan was placed before the Commission in order to obtain its approval of the securities to be issued. A majority of the Commission granted approval, but subject to the condition that testimony be taken as to the fairness of the fees, and subject to such order as the Commission might make on that point. As appears from Justice Stone's statement of the facts, neither the bankers nor the lawyers who appeared before the Commission disclosed to it the intention of taking advantage of the permission contained in the order, and of thereafter denying the validity of the conditions attached to such permission. The formal party in these proceedings was the reorganized company, which the bankers "created and controlled." They caused it to go before the federal district court which had charge of the receivership and had ruled that the properties could not be transferred to the new company until the reorganization securities were approved by the Commission. The bankers caused the new company to display the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commission's order to the court, but without disclosure of the intention "to repudiate the condition upon which the order was founded." After the horse was out of the stable, and nothing remained but investigation of the fees, the new company applied to the federal courts for protection against any attempt by the Commission to interfere with those fees. The lower court said that the prior moves in the game constituted "a representation" that the new company "had accepted the order and expected to comply with the condition." This was the view adopted by the minority members of the Supreme Court.

The conservative members of that Court held that the Commission did not have jurisdiction, since the fees were fixed by a "contract between private persons to which the carrier was not a party." The majority opinion said that it was a contract between the reorganization managers, the committees and the stockholders. Justice Stone and his colleagues felt that these were "technical distinctions" which "ought not to affect the authority of the Commission." The minority called attention to the fact that the "bankers, the present reorganization managers, were active in bringing about the receivership and have since dominated the reorganization. The Commission said. . . . : 'For months prior to the receivership they [the railroad's directors] were impotent. It was an ideal situation for the bankers to control. This they promptly did, arranged all the details, framed up the committees favorably to themselves, put themselves on the bondholders' protective committee and constituted themselves reorganization managers.' As managers, they formulated the reorganization plan, and incorporated it in an agreement between themselves and the committees. In every practical sense, the reorganization managers controlled the foreclosure proceedings resulting in the sale of the property of the old company. . . . They created and controlled the new company."

The minority also discussed the broad question of the need for government regulation of expenses in railroad reorganization. The expenses in the St. Paul case included compensation to others than the bankers and the lawyers. The bankers fixed the total expense fund at $3,500,000.

The minority opinion reads: ". . . If shareholders . . . must contribute to the rehabilitation of their properties excessive amounts upon which a reorganized carrier may not earn an adequate return, railroad credit in a broad sense is affected . . . and the public interest suffers. . . . Railroad credit and the marketability of railroad securities have . . . been profoundly affected . . . by the numerous railroad reorganizations," attended by "wasteful and extravagant methods of reorganization."

The opinion of the minority may be regarded as a report on the St. Paul reorganization, and in that sense is somewhat comparable to the report of the Interstate Commerce Commission on the transactions which brought the old St. Paul company to bankruptcy and necessitated its reorganization. Just as the minority of the Supreme Court discussed questions of waste, of profits by men in control at the company's expense and of efforts to conduct railroad affairs outside the limits of government regulation, so the Interstate Commerce Commission discussed such issues in reporting the results of its inquiry. It found waste and extravagance, improper and immoderate profits by men in control of the company and a flouting of the Commission's regulation. It reported that the company's bankers, the same firms which later reorganized it, made undue profits which should have gone instead into the treasury of the company.

As we have already suggested, the St. Paul case has an interstate bearing on the proposed Eastern railroad mergers which were announced a few weeks ago. They will involve issues similar to those discussed by Justice Stone and by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Among the men who will guide the roads in these consolidations are the lawyers and bankers who denied that the Interstate Commerce Commission had jurisdiction over their St. Paul fees. Those fees will probably appear petty in amount, when compared with the bankers' and lawyers' charges for consolidating the Eastern roads. If these should prove to be excessive, the losers will be the railroads, and thus the public and the investors. If the Interstate Commerce Commission attempts to determine whether the charges are reasonable or not, its authority to do so may again be put in question. These methods for avoiding control may also be employed in other phases of railroad affairs. This possibility complicates the problem raised by railroad consolidation. It has already been urged by various Congressmen that the Eastern rail mergers are so large as to threaten the power or capacity of the government to regulate them.

The public has felt secure in the knowledge that there is an Interstate Commerce Commission, and that it regulates the railroads in the interest of the public. That feeling of security is disturbed by the St. Paul decision.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1931, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT. DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK ALVIN JOHNSON
E. C. LINDEMAN LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES
R. G. TUGWELL LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Can Indians Govern India?

AT A HEIGHT of six thousand feet above the deserts of southern Persia, in a steady and comfortable airplane, it is easy to review one's impressions of a seven weeks' stay in India. The abstract terms which politicians are discussing at the Round Table have taken color and shape. India's demand for self-government means now for me a crowd dressed in homespun and white caps, which shouts its slogans behind a group of prisoners in handcuffs whom the police are escorting to jail. Ministers I visualize as those polite but ineffectual persons whom I encountered hunting for jobs in the lobbies of a provincial capital. The "depressed classes" stand, dark, meager figures in patient humility on the edge of a seated crowd of villagers, until I beckon them to approach. Can I marshal these figures so that they shall take their parts in an orderly political debate on the issue of self-government?

The first impression that disengages itself is disconcerting. At a distance I had not realized how slight the preparation for self-government has been. The provincial Councils enjoyed, under the Montagu reform scheme, much latitude in debate, but very little of the reality of power. Everyone knows that finance was a "reserved" subject under the firm grasp of an English bureaucrat. But it was rarely that the elected Indian ministers of the "transferred" subjects, even of education and agriculture, had the will, the capacity or the prestige to assert themselves. The vote of the elected members of the Council might upset them, but for their nomination to office they must look to the Governor's favor. Inevitably these Indian ministers became the spokesmen of the permanent bureaucracy, which in its turn grew skilled in the art of recruiting a majority in the elected Council by dispensing patronage.

The initial error of both the reform schemes, the grouping of voters by religion in separate communal electorates, vitiated the whole experiment and prevented the formation of parties which would concern themselves with social and economic realities. Religion in these contests was nothing more than the flag under which rival sections of the upper and middle class fought for the distribution of posts and offices. Theology has no place in these contentions. The absorbing concern of each communal party is to obtain for its own co-religionists as high a proportion as possible of jobs. Where appointment is by examination, the struggle is transferred to the schools and colleges; and Moslems, who are, in the mass, rather poorer and much worse educated than Hindus, will fight to win the reservation of a fixed percentage of places, irrespective of merit, in every governmental training college. The acute and chronic unemployment in the educated class lends passion to these rivalries, which in their turn frustrate any normal and fruitful development of political thinking.

If to the small educated class government means jobs, what does it mean to the villages? In its most beneficent incarnation it means water. I saw it at its best in the irrigation colonies of the Punjab, where the engineer has turned desert into garden, and in the villages tall men and stately bullocks reap rich harvests beside the canal. But the Punjab is a favored province, for it breeds men and horses for the army. Elsewhere one rarely met with government in this beneficent shape. In the average village, government means the land tax and the police and very little more. The main roads which it requires for its own purposes are fairly good, but the village roads are mere sand tracks, impassable in the rainy season. In the village school, which only the less impoverished children can afford to attend, a teacher who receives a lower wage than the policeman does for a small fee what he can. There may be a dispensary many miles away, hopelessly beyond the reach of a sick child stricken with fever. Government in the concrete means in these villages the police at the nearest *thana,* or station.

To write temperately or credibly about the Indian police is not easy. Their British chiefs have struggled with very little success to modify the tradition which earlier conquerors left behind them. Wherever one goes one hears the most sweeping charges of universal corruption levied against Indian police, officers as well as men, and non-official Englishmen will confirm what Indians allege. In the villages one could not escape this subject, and every day from every class, landlords and money lenders as well as peasants, I heard with wearisome detail charges of venality, blackmail and brutality against these Indian policemen (including their officers). I had ample and painful evidence in the sight of wounds and bruises, and even broken limbs, whenever I moved through villages in the wake of detachments engaged in collecting taxes.

British officials are few and busy and, rightly or wrongly, the peasants believe that it is useless to complain. A determined man may, at great expense, win a case against a police officer who has wronged him by carrying it to the higher courts which enjoy universal respect. But even then it does not follow that the guilty officer will be punished or dismissed. I had the curiosity to collect the legal records of cases of this kind, and some illuminating personal experiences came to me also in my wanderings. The British official tradition

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in India is one of high integrity and devotion to duty. But as I looked at it from the angle of the Indian peasant it had a fault which all but neutralized these virtues. It lives on prestige. This government cannot shake off the age-long tradition of autocracy—that it is above the people. It dare not admit a fault, or rebuke a subordinate for excess of zeal. It exacts loyalty from these Indian officials and it owes them loyalty in return. It will not dismiss a reliable police officer, even when a judge has censured him in open court, merely because he has ill-used peasants.

This is what any student of human nature would expect, though the grossness of some of these cases startled me. The British official in India is doubly aloof: first, because in social life he mixes little with unofficial Indians, and second, because in office hours he is surrounded by Indian subordinates who may have an interest in misleading him. This handicap, always serious, makes good or even tolerable government impossible so soon as the nationalist resistance attains the proportions of a mass movement. Today the British official moves and works among a hostile people, and his Indian subordinates are subjected to a rigid social boycott. In these conditions government becomes a sort of civil war.

No sane man who has seen India during this year of turmoil supposes that the grant of responsible government can be delayed without irreparable damage, moral and economic, to its people and the British. But these rambling reflections have led in two contrary directions. On the one hand, the educated class which alone, under the present system, can influence policy, has had no sufficient preparation. It is absorbed in the struggle for jobs, and has allowed itself to be split by religious divisions. On the other hand, an attempt to perpetuate bureaucratic rule would offer no prospect of better government to the masses in the villages. We dare neither stand still nor go backward, but the advance will be perilous and unhappy unless the new constitution brings the reality with the forms of democracy.

On one condition there ought to be no hesitation. Parliamentary institutions cannot function on the basis of separate communal electorates. While these remain no stable parties can be formed, nor can the electorate be trained to vote on the social and economic issues which clamor for constructive handling. If the Moslem diehards veto any voluntary settlement with the Hindus, the British government must be prepared to dictate. That way out of the impasse even the Moslems in their hearts might welcome. So much, in a talk which I had at Delhi, their ablest leader confessed. Back and forward we had argued, when at last he startled me by blurting out: "A government should govern. You all believe in a single electorate. Why don't you impose it?"

With this one change, the possibility of genuine democratic government would begin for India. Parties would be driven to seek support for programs, where today it suffices to appeal to religious prejudice. My second condition will seem more daring. I believe that in India we must do what has been done in Ceylon: we must base the constitution on universal, or at least on manhood, franchise. At a distance, when one recalls the daunting percentage of illiteracy, such an advance may seem rash. As one learns to know these villages the difficulty tends to disappear. These peasants do not think and would not vote as individuals. They suffer and think as a compact mass: and as a mass each village would vote. To ask whether we shall enfranchise the illiterate villager is to put the question in a misleading way. The true question is rather: "Shall we enfranchise the village?" If you answer "No," you must face the alternative: you must then confer the franchise, and with it the ultimate control over government, on the owner of the village.

That would be tolerable if the interests of owner and tenant were identical. In fact they are violently opposed, and the landlord will use his political power to perpetuate one of the worst systems of tenure which survives in the modern world. The devisers of Indian constitutions have been sedulous in providing for the representation of minorities. Is it not time that we should provide also for the representation of the majority? At present the tenant masses of the villages have rarely a vote and never a representative. So long as we retain a property qualification there can be little hope of ending the present system of exploitation, nor will the machinery of government, including the rough and arbitrary police, be brought under popular control.

These, to old students of India, will appear eccentric and unhelpful conclusions. A year ago they would have been so. But in this last year a new India has wakened to action: first the women and then the villages have entered politics. The Congress, when it launched the policy of resisting taxes, thought only of starving the government of India's exchequer. In effect, in those provinces which have a system of tenancy, it has raised the most fundamental of social issues that can divide society in a country that lives by agriculture. This sudden swing of attention to the burdens that the peasant carries in rent and land tax came at a moment when the prices of his main crops had dropped to a half, or even to a third, of last year's figure. Fresh from the misery of these villages I confess that the telegrams from London which tell of learned constitutional debates over the basis of federation strike me as unreal. Indian thought is not busied with these things. It has been driven down to the naked facts of village life—the starvation and the usurious debts, the taxes, and the rent that goes to a landlord who performs no social function. These will be, or ought to be, the first problems that a self-governing India faces. If she postpones them,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or if she solves them with a bias towards the landed class, she will be confronted, before another harvest goes to the usurer's granary, with agrarian revolt. If we draft the constitution on the assumption that these peasants are still passive and negligible, we shall perpetuate injustice today and lay the train for such an uprising of the villages as overtook Russia. The far-sighted policy is to arm these awakening peasants with a constitutional weapon.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

"All I Want Is Work"

Forty dollars a week will keep a dog in one of the swanky New York hotels.—*News Item.*

I AM IN the City Free Employment Bureau, 54 Lafayette Street. From the window I look into the courtyard of the Tombs Prison. To the north the Criminal Courts Building frowns.

In the street I can see a snaky queue of dark figures. I follow the somber line with my eyes. It leads to the loft in which I find myself.

Turning my back to the gaunt Tombs I sweep the scene before me. A thousand men are in the loft. The front line is ten feet away. A stout rope is stretched from pillar to pillar. Behind the rope the men are herded. Men? Many are boys, still in their teens; a few, very few, rosy-cheeked youngsters; the rest old beyond their time. Shoulders broken by responsibility. Faces that look into a black abyss.

The room is almost silent. A slight, despairing hum from the job seekers. Patient, stretched on the rack of a social system that compels this degradation, they stand quite mute. The suspense is painful. Behind the desks near me the clerks sit with pencils poised. Waiting. A telephone bell rings. A new job! A hurried conversation. A card is filled out, handed to the "auctioneer," a gray-haired man, round faced, with curling mustaches. Grasping his megaphone and stepping briskly on a dais, he shouts: "Man wanted to repair typewriter, four hours work, fifty cents an hour. Desk Number 2."

There is a movement in the crowd. The jellied mass quivers. Half a dozen men squirm out. They throw themselves at desk Number 2. Work, blessed blessing, is within their grasp, perhaps. They overwhelm the clerk with a torrent of appeals.

"Please, mister, I'm a good mechanic."

"Please, I gotta a family."

"Gimme a chance."

Swiftly the clerk selects two men. The lucky competitors dash from the room with the precious cards in their fists, each hoping to "beat the other fellow to it." Two are sent for each job listed so that the employer may have a choice.

The clerk turns back to his desk. With leaden feet the four disappointed men move slowly back and merge again with the patient mass. A thousand desperate souls—minus two—freeze again into a mute appeal. Until a telephone again rings.

"One sandwich man, a dollar and a half a day. Desk Number 4."

This time a dozen fling themselves at the desk. You are struck by their youth. Here is a boy, seventeen, begging for the job. Here a skilled mechanic of thirty. Several laborers, none over forty or so. Again two are selected. They dash off hysterically. In the others, hope, faintly flickering, dies to a low black flame.

Half a dozen times the scene is reënacted. An hour passes. The loft is cleared to make way for another thousand who have been waiting in the cold. The applicants, Director E. C. Rybicki will tell you, are handled in five shifts. Waiting two hours in line outside and one hour inside prevents more than one turn a day.

Five thousand men, on the average, ask for work daily in this loft. On Monday there are more. Once or twice it was ten thousand. Perhaps three or four hundred get jobs. Nearly all are temporary, from an hour to several days. One or two weeks' work is unusual. Once a request came for two men to work one hour each moving lumber —fifty cents. The rush to the desk assumed football proportions.

"For God's sake, men, stand back, this is only one hour's work," the clerk cried.

But the scramble kept on until a dozen men had presented themselves.

Painters, carpenters, sheet-metal workers, with union scales calling for $12 to $14 a day, work for $4 or $5—anything they can get to take home to their families.

Near the windows are a dozen enormous files, a deep reservoir of misery. They contain the names of 60,000 applicants, listed by names and occupations. You can engage anybody from a lion tamer to a clown, but in the main the applicants are from life's ordinary activities.

I turn the cards at random. Here is a painter, 45 years old, with two dependents, out of work three months; another painter, with four dependents, out of work seven months; a machinist, 38 years old, with six dependents, out of work five months; a carpenter, with four dependents, out of work six months; a porter, idle eight months. It is not uncommon to find records of men out of work from one to two years.

Occasionally the bureau's employees get a glimpse of the cruel exploitation of the unemployed. Once a kindly hotel manager, touched by the personal appeal of the bureau director, telephoned for a chambermaid. A girl left the bureau within five minutes and hurried to the hotel—one of the best known in the city—only to be told by the personnel manager that the job was filled. She wandered over to a private employment agency on Sixth Avenue and applied for a job. After paying

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her fee she was sent to work in the hotel which she had just left. Obviously there was collusion between the private employment agency and the hotel personnel manager.

Leaving the City Free Employment Bureau I turned down the street to the rear of 346 Broadway. On the seventh floor are the offices of the Mayor's Unemployment Committee. Here come the urgent pleas for relief. A middle-aged woman, deserted by her husband, is destitute. The gas has been turned off. Her boy, skylarking with some lads, was beaten about the head by a policeman. That was a year ago. He has been in an up-state hospital for the insane ever since. She cannot afford to visit him—"but the doctor writes."

Such a case touches the heart of the young woman investigator who hears the story. But a few bread tickets is all she can give. The city's relief is limited to families with young children. The fund is not large enough to cover the others. Old couples, young couples, bachelors, spinsters, widows and widowers, even if they are destitute but have not young children dependent on them, they must look elsewhere for help—to other agencies whose budgets, even capital funds, are being depleted.

"I cried every night at first until I got used to it," the sympathetic young investigator tells me.

Many times, when desperate pleas on the telephone warned that nerves were at the breaking point and suicide imminent, Jerry Daly, the efficient and courteous secretary, has had to call up police headquarters for immediate action.

From a distant section of Brooklyn a young man walked into the Committee's offices one day. He was penniless.

"They've turned my gas off because my bills are unpaid," he said. "I can't take that way out. The only thing left for me to do is to smother my three children with a pillow."

There was the boy of twenty-two from Baltimore whose landlady was holding his trunk for arrears in rent while he tramped the streets for work and slept in the subway.

"I have always respected private property," he told me, "but I can no longer stand looking into a restaurant and seeing people eat. I just got out of the Lenox Hill Hospital. My chest is all taped up. I waited three hours in a bread line and then fainted. Exposure, the doctor said. That is the second time they have taken me to a hospital from the bread line. I tell you I won't stand it any longer. I don't owe society anything. You can't blame me for anything I do. All I want is work, any kind of work."

I looked into his eyes. They were bloodshot. He had been crying. No doctor was necessary to diagnose the case. The boy was on the verge of a physical and mental breakdown. The cards were in the lap of Fate marked Suicide—Crime—Insanity.

The wife of an iron worker writes that her husband has been out of work eighteen months. No money for rent. They have given up applying to employment agencies.

"I am wondering how poor, how ragged and how many children we must have to get help," she says. "We can't carry on more than a few weeks longer. This world is only a good place to die in."

The City Employment Bureau. The Mayor's Unemployment Committee. Two slight fragments of the Dantean Inferno that is New York City in this year of grace and unemployment—1931.

LOUIS STARK.

Leaving the Petate

THE PETATE is a woven straw mat, in shape an oblong square, full of variations in color and texture, and very sweet smelling when it is new. In its ordinary form, natural colored, thick and loosely contrived, it is the Mexican Indian bed, an ancient sort of sleeping mat such as all Oriental peoples use. There is a proverb full of vulgar contempt which used to be much quoted here in Mexico: "Whoever was born on a *petate* will always smell of the straw." Since 1910, I shall say simply to fix a date on changes which have been so gradual it is impossible to say when the transition actually was made, this attitude has disappeared officially. The *petate,* an object full of charm for the eye, and immensely useful around any house, is no longer a symbol of racial and economic degradation from which there is no probable hope of rising. On the contrary, many of the best 1920 revolutionists insisted on smelling of the straw whether they were born on the *petate* or not. It was a mark of the true revolutionary to acknowledge Indian blood, the more the better, to profess Indian points of view, to make, in short, an Indian revolution. All the interlocking advances of the *mestizo* (mixed Spanish and Indian) revolution since Benito Juarez have been made for the Indian, and only secondarily by him—much as the recent famous renascence of Indian sculpture and painting was the work of European-trained *mestizos.* No matter: this article is not going to deal with grand generalities. I am interested in a few individual human beings I have met here lately, whose lives make me believe that the Indian, when he gets a chance, is leaving the *petate.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And no wonder. He wraps himself in his *sarape,* a pure-wool blanket woven on a hand loom and colored sometimes with vegetable dyes, and lies down to rest on his *petate.* The blankets are very beautiful, but they are always a little short, and in this table-land of Mexico at least, where the nights are always cold, one blanket is not enough. The *petate,* beautiful as it is, is also a little short, so the man curls down on his side, draws his knees up and tucks his head down in a prenatal posture, and sleeps like that. He can sleep like that anywhere: on street corners, by the roadside, in caves, in doorways, in his own hut, if he has one. Sometimes he sleeps sitting with his knees drawn up to his chin and his hat over his eyes, forming a kind of pyramid with his blanket wound about him. He makes such an attractive design as he sits thus: no wonder people go around painting pictures of him. But I think he sleeps there because he is numbed with tiredness and has no other place to go, and not in the least because he is a public decoration. Toughened as he may be to hardship, you can never convince me he is really comfortable, or likes this way of sleeping. So the first moment he gets a chance, a job, a little piece of land, he leaves his *petate* and takes as naturally as any other human or brute being to the delights of kinder living. At first he makes two wooden stands, and puts boards across them, and lays his *petate* on a platform that lifts him from the chill of the earth. From this there is only a step to thin cotton mattresses, and pillows made of lumps of rags tied up in a square of muslin, and thence. . . .

There were presently three women near me who had lately left the *petate:* Consuelo, Eufemia and Hilaria. Consuelo is the maid of a young American woman here, Eufemia was my maid and Hilaria is her aunt. Eufemia is young, almost pure Aztec, combative, acquisitive, secretive, very bold and handsome and full of tricks. Hilaria is a born intriguer, a carrier of gossip and maker of mischief. Until recently she worked for a hot-headed Mexican man who managed his servants in the classical middle-class way: by bullying and heckling. This gentleman would come in for his dinner, and if it was not ready on the instant, he would grab his hat and stamp shouting into the street again. "My señor has an incredibly violent nature," said Hilaria, melting with pride. But she grew into the habit of sitting in my kitchen most of the time, whispering advice to Eufemia about how best to get around me; until one day the señor stamped around his house shouting he would rather live in the streets than put up with such a cook, so Hilaria has gone back to her native village near Toluca—back, for a time at least, to her *petate.* She has never really left it in spirit. She wears her *reboso,* the traditional dark-colored cotton-fringed scarf, in the old style, and her wavy black hair is braided in two short tails tied together in the back. Her niece Eufemia came to me dressed in the same way, but within a week she returned from her first day off with a fashionable haircut, parted on the side, waved and peaked extravagantly at the nape —"In the shape of a heart," she explained—and a pair of high-heeled patent-leather pumps which she confessed hurt her feet shockingly.

Hilaria came over for a look, went away, and brought back Eufemia's godmother, her cousins and a family friend, all old-fashioned women like herself, to exclaim over Eufemia's haircut. They turned her about and uttered little yips of admiration tempered with rebuke. What a girl! but look at that peak in the back! What do you think your mother will say? But see, the curls on top, my God! Look here over the ears—like a boy, Eufemia, aren't you ashamed of yourself! and so on. And then the shoes, and then Eufemia's dark-red crochet scarf which she wore in place of a *reboso* —well, well. . . .

They were really very pleased and proud of her. A few days later a very slick pale young man showed up at the house and with all formality explained that he was engaged to marry Eufemia, and would I object if now and then he stopped by to salute her? Naturally I should never object to such a thing. He explained that for years upon years he had been looking for a truly virtuous, honorable girl to make his wife, and now he had found her. Would I be so good as to watch her carefully, never allow her to go on the street after dark, nor receive other visitors? I assured him I would have done this anyhow. He offered me a limp hand, bowed, shook hands with Eufemia, who blushed alarmingly, and disappeared gently as a cat. Eufemia dashed after me to explain that her young man was not an Indian—I could see that—that he was a barber who made good money, and it was he who had given her the haircut. He had also given her a black lace veil to wear in church—lace veils were once the prerogative of the rich—and had told her to put aside her *reboso.* It was he who had advised her to buy the high-heeled shoes.

After this announcement of the engagement, Eufemia began saving her money and mine with miserly concentration. She was going to buy a sewing machine. In every department of the household I began to feel the dead weight of Eufemia's sewing machine. Food doubled in price, and there was less of it. Everything, from soap to a packet of needles, soared appallingly until I began to look about for a national economic crisis. She would not spend one penny of her wages, and whenever I left town for a few days, leaving her the ordinary allowance for food, I always returned to find the kitten gaunt and yelling with famine and Eufemia pallid and inert from a diet of tortillas and coffee. If all of us perished in the effort, she was going to have a sewing machine, and if we held out long enough, a brass bed and a victrola.

In the meantime, Consuelo came down with a mysterious and stubborn malady. Her young

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American woman briskly advised her to go to one of the very up-to-date public clinics for treatment. Consuelo at once "went Indian," as her employer defines that peculiar state of remoteness which is not sullenness nor melancholy, nor even hostility—simply a condition of not-thereness to all approach. So long as it lasts, a mere foreigner might as well save his breath. Consuelo is Totonac, speaks her own tongue with her friends, is puritanically severe, honest and caretaking. Her village is so far away you must travel by train for a day or so, and then by horseback for two days more, and in her sick state she turned with longing to this far-off place where she could get the kind of help she really trusted.

Somehow she was prevented from going, so she called in a *curandera* who came from this same village. A *curandera* is a cross between a witch wife and an herb doctor. She steeped Consuelo in home-made brews and incantations, and what we had feared was a tumor the *curandera* identified as a rib which had been jarred from its moorings. Whatever it was, Consuelo recovered, more or less. Consuelo has two cousins who left the *petate* and are now nurses in a famous American homeopathic sanitarium. They send her long lists of dietary rules and hygienic counsels, which her American employer follows with great effect. Consuelo prefers to stick to her own witch doctors, and lets the foreign ones alone.

Hilaria is a *curandera,* and so is Eufemia in a limited way, and both of them remind me very much of the early American housewife who kept her family medicine chest supplied with her own remedies from tried recipes. They have extensive herb knowledge, and Eufemia was always bringing me a steaming glassful of brew for every smallest discomfort imaginable. I swallowed them down, and so ran a gamut of flavors and aromas, from the staggering bitterness of something she called the "prodigious cup" to the apple-flavored freshness of manzanilla flowers. Hilaria pierces ears when the moon is waning, to prevent swelling, and ritually dabs the ear with boiling fat, which should be an excellent antiseptic. To cure headache, a bottle of hot water at the feet draws the pain from the head. This works better if the sign of the cross is made over the head and the bottle. Every benefit is doubled if given with a blessing, and Eufemia, who knows the virtues of rubbing alcohol, always began my alcohol bath with "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, may this make you well," which was so gracious an approach I could hardly refuse to feel better.

She agrees with Hilaria that a small green *chile* rubbed on the outer eyelid will cure inflammation of the eye, but you must toss it over your shoulder from you, and walk hastily away without glancing back. During my illness she moistened a cloth with orange-leaf water and put it on my head as a cure for fever. In the morning I found between the folds a little picture of the Holy Face. Eufemia takes up readily with every new thing, and uses iodoform, lysol, patent toothpaste, epsom salts, bicarbonate of soda, rubbing alcohol and mustard plasters very conveniently. Hilaria sticks firmly to her native herbs, and to cure colds puts a plaster of *zapote*—a soft black fruit—heated red hot, on the chest of her patients. Both remedies are remarkably helpful. But Eufemia is leaving the *petate,* and Hilaria is going back to it.

I sympathized with Eufemia's ambitions, even to her fondness for toilet articles of imported German celluloid, her adoration for Japanese cups and saucers in preference to the Mexican pottery which I so love. But I had not reckoned on providing a dowry for a young woman, and the time came for us to part. I set the day two weeks off, and she agreed amiably. Then I gave her her month's wages, and two hours later she had packed up her bed and sent it away. Her young man came in and professed astonishment at the state of affairs. "She is not supposed to go for two weeks," I told him, "and at least she must stay until tomorrow." "I will see to that," said the oily Enrique, "this is very surprising." "Tomorrow she may go and welcome, in peace," I assured him.

"Ah, yes, peace, peace," said Enrique. "Peace," I echoed, and we stood there waving our hands at each other in a peculiar horizontal gesture, palms downward, crossing back and forth at our several wrists, about eye level. Between us we wore Eufemia down, and there was peace of a sort.

But in the meantime, she had no bed, so she slept that night on a large *petate* with two red blankets, and seemed very cheerful about it. After all, it was her last night on a *petate.* I discovered later that it was Enrique who had suggested to her that she leave at once, so they might be married and go to Vera Cruz. Eufemia will never go back to her village. She is going to have a brass bed, and a sewing machine and a victrola, and there is no reason why a good barber should not buy a Ford. Her children will be added to the next generation of good little conservative right-minded dull people, like Enrique, or, with Eufemia's fighting spirit, they may become *mestizo* revolutionaries, and keep up the work of saving the Indian.

My new cook is Teodora. "Think of Eufemia going away with just a barber," she says. "My cousin Nicolasa captured a chauffeur. A chauffeur is somebody. But a barber!"

"Just the same, I am glad she is married," I say.

Teodora says, "Oh, not really married, just behind the church, as we say. We marry with everybody, one here, one there, a little while with each one."

"I hope Eufemia stays married, because I have plans for her family," I tell her.

"Oh, she will have a family, never fear," says Teodora.

KATHERINE ANNE PORTER.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Washington Notes

The Wickersham Straddle—High and Dry with Hoover—Lining Up the Votes—Renomination Tactics

SINCE its publication, the political significance of the Wickersham report and its effect upon the 1932 presidential campaign has almost completely obscured everything else about this short session of Congress in which presidential politics always plays so large a part. Or rather, I should say, the real matter of prime political importance was Mr. Hoover's letter of transmittal, not the report itself. It is that letter which has not only drawn clearly the line upon which the two parties will divide in the next fight and indicated prohibition as the unescapable, paramount issue, but it has named the Republican presidential candidate.

The interesting thing to me is the completeness with which Mr. Hoover's closest and most intimate friends missed their guess as to what his course would be. Weeks ago I was told by a number of those in a position to have his confidence that he would utilize the Wickersham report as a way out. They were united and emphatic in their belief that if the report offered the opportunity, he would go along with it toward some sort of modification. Of his own private convictions of the unenforceable nature of the Eighteenth Amendment under existing conditions they entertained no doubt whatever. They counted heavily on the Wickersham report to give him the chance to speak out and supply something akin to real White House leadership on the most important public question of the day.

Well, the Wickersham Commission offered him the opportunity all right. He could have taken any one of four or five more or less liberal proposals therein suggested. He could have agreed with a majority of the Commission that present conditions are intolerably bad, that the law has not been enforced and cannot be and that a revision of the Amendment is desirable. But he did nothing of the kind. He took the Dry official declaration against repeal and endorsed it most heartily. He ignored the individual views of the members of the Commission, practically every one of whom—even the Dryest—agreed that something should be done, and emphatically asserted that he does not agree with those who urge revision. In brief, instead of moving toward modification and revision with his Commission, he went in the other direction. He definitely placed himself against any change at all. He is now more definitely Dry, more completely committed to a continuation of the present prohibition laws, than ever before.

In face of the Commission's report, which is overwhelmingly, though muddily, in favor of some sort of change, this is a surprising stand—and it is impossible to exaggerate the astonishment of the aforementioned friends. They do not try to explain. They simply throw up their hands. The amazing thing is that in the whole White House circle, in the whole list of Mr. Hoover's intimate friends, I do not know one who is in complete accord with him on the attitude he has taken, not one who would not have preferred seeing him move toward the other side.

This decision is not only understandable, but no one can even say that it is bad politics. Certainly, so far as the nomination is concerned, it not only promotes but ensures Mr. Hoover's selection. With the exception of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the Republican party is Dry in practically all the Wet states. Certainly this is true of Massachusetts, Ohio and, despite the William Hale Thompson machine in Chicago, also of Illinois. In the Middle and Far West there is of course no question about any important state except Wisconsin. In brief, nobody thinks that the militant Wets in the next Republican convention will be very much more numerous than before, notwithstanding the undoubted increase in Wet sentiment throughout the country.

From various sources I have evolved a theory about Mr. Hoover's stand. He has, I believe, been thinking of political conditions very intensely since the election last November. As I pointed out in this place last week, he has already begun to prepare for his renomination. Plenty of evidence of this fact may be found in his conciliatory attitude toward the New York Republican leaders, and the various recent presidential appointments in New York and elsewhere. I think Mr. Hoover has convinced himself that no one who is not Dry can get the Republican nomination.

This seems sound enough to me. I think he considers it inevitable that the Republicans will have the Dry side of this issue in the coming campaign and believes that a middle-ground candidate would lose the friendship of the Drys without gaining support from the Wets. For this belief, of course, he has the best possible foundation. No more striking object lesson could possibly be imagined than the luckless Ruth Hanna McCormick. Also there was the unfortunate Frelinghuysen in New Jersey, and others. Up to this point I think Mr. Hoover is correct. I agree that the Republican party is overwhelmingly Dry, that the convention will be Dry and that it is dangerous and generally fatal for a candidate who has been identified with one side of this question to move toward the other.

Where I disagree with Mr. Hoover, however, is in the opinion he holds that the country as well as his party is still Dry. I think the country has been Dry, but I doubt that it is now. I am convinced that it is getting Wetter every year, will be Wetter in 1932 than it is now, and that there is a fine chance in the great pivotal states upon which the election hinges that the people will decisively register Wet when next they get the opportunity. Mr. Hoover bets that they won't register Wet in a presidential election in which other questions are involved, chief of which will be Democratic rule of the government. Despite the present business depression, Mr. Hoover's idea, I think, is that by 1932 there will be sufficient signs of a returning prosperity to prevent the anti-prohibitionists, who usually vote the Republican ticket, from breaking the habit. He may be right. Time alone will tell. From all these remarks one might be led to believe that I do not think Mr. Hoover's Dry declaration against revision was wholly dictated by principle or presents his actual views with complete candor. Well, I don't.

T. R. B.

Washington.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Painting, Opera and Theater

The Rousseau Exhibition

A COLLECTION of the paintings of Henri Rousseau is being shown in a new little gallery on East Fifty-seventh Street. The walls are chastely lined with pale burlap and the floor with a dark-gray felt-like carpet: there are gray-padded modernistic chairs made of slender aluminum pipes bent into sleigh-runners instead of legs.

Henri Rousseau was a French peasant who worked in the customs house all the week and painted on Sundays. At forty he gave up his job and tried to sell his pictures in Paris, but had to fall back on giving music lessons on a rented violin. He used to wheel his paintings in a hand cart to the galleries and was treated as a joke at both the Salon and the Independents, and he finally got to giving his canvases away as "souvenirs" to people who came to see him. He died in a hospital with no money and with nobody to take care of him. Today there is an atelier in Paris manufacturing fake Rousseaus, and some of them are very likely in this collection.

At any rate, there are a great many fine pictures here—pictures without depth, full of green flimsy and firm luxuriant leaves all on the same plane, blue, blue-green and gray-blue skies, clear yet tarnished by rain or heat, bright French sun in which little white houses stand out solid as stone. A strange lady with her hand to her breast lost in a strange grove of stiff wispy green locust trees under an unearthly green sky and another lady in a bright crude red dress with a parasol over her shoulde appallingly and inexplicably glowering as she is overtopped by the green gigantic clear-leafed foliage of a summer jungle; a stocky boulder-like Holy Family, Joseph with a long pipe and a fine raw red robe; a dwarfed morose child in a huddled red mass, just about to burst into tears; a French bourgeois family of paper dolls in a red-wheeled cart driven by a white pony of incredible distinctness and solidity, the pony with a blond coquettish forelock, the father with a brave barber's mustache and part, holding the reins with doll's hands, and in the wagon a disconcerting Skye terrier as big as the people themselves and with the aspect of a medieval demon; a toy airplane flat on the foreground like a medieval angel; a toy ship under gray rain in a wavy green-gray sea; a puppet Don Juan against garnet hangings; still lifes of marvelous dark vivid flowers with leaves in stereoscopic relief.

And that dreamlike remembered tropics: the rain in the planturous jungle where the coarse green, yellow and red almost mask the wire of lightning, yet the dismayed tiger crouches cowering with bulging buttonwood eyes; the pale river from which emerge enormous pink and yellow water lilies bigger than the flamingoes in the foreground, while on the farther bank a line of palms scissored out as simply and distinctly as if in two dimensions are placed against a palm-jungle like a purely decorative screen, which yet makes them the mysterious threshold, for all the emptiness of the picture, of an unimaginable world. Rousseau had been in Mexico in his youth as a musician in a military band when the French captured Mexico City; and one of the things that those few people in New York who have been in a position to acquire a taste for painting come to imbibe at this exhibition is the same thing that people came to brace themselves with at the exhibition of Mexican art last fall at the Metropolitan—the same thing that made them pore with such gratification and wonder over rough masks, penny toys, blankets with bright simple patterns: the sun, the animals and plants, the live colors, the natural shapes of life, among the abstractions, the colorless masses, the humanity robbed of its flesh and immolated to abstraction and mass of the sad stiff Anglo-Saxon city.

La Boheme

At the Metropolitan Opera House you sit in seats that have been lent you in that vast, formidable and fatuous auditorium where nobody except the subscribers in the orchestra and the boxes can even get a view of of the stage. The brassy and rigid proscenium arch tries to open on the gayety and heartache of the romantic Latin Quarter of Murger, tries to liberate in New York a little sweet musical Italian sentimentality—or rather, it relentlessly clamps the opera with a disproportionate expensive setting: a rare guaranteed piece from Europe which comes high in New York. When Mimi talks to Rodolphe in the snow and tells him that she cannot stand his jealousy and asks him to send her her things but to keep her bonnet to remember her by, we almost pass for a moment through the grill of the gray gate by the cabaret in the *boulevard extérieur* among low towns and cultivated landscapes, into the free, chill and humane French air, where human feelings are not made flippant or bald, where a café can be at once serious, cheerful and easy on a winter night. But the sample has mostly lost its virtue in the storerooms of the Metropolitan. And as this city has degraded and crowded out its own *vie de Bohême* below Fourteenth Street, so it has devitalized Mimi and Musette with its dead petrifying touch.—Between the acts, you meet a friend, very tight, who has also had tickets given him and who says he is alone and feels miserable. It turns out that he has been thinking all the time it was "Manon."

Schnitzler and Philip Barry

A frail, sensitive and lovely woman in a Middle Western town is married to a good and dull young man, who breeds horses and loves college reunions, but who cannot give her a child. There arrives in the town on a lecture tour a brilliant psychologist: he stays with them and makes love to the wife. Then he goes, and the woman has a child by him without the husband's ever suspecting it is not his own. The child, however, involuntarily antagonized by his mother against his supposed father, who insists upon making him ride horseback in spite of his mortal fear of horses, has a bad fall and as a result of it passes into a neurotic stupor from which it is impossible to rouse him. At this moment the voice of the lover is heard on the radio lecturing in Chicago. The mother flies to the phone and summons him, and the doctor, alone in the room with the child, finds a lever for the psychological obstruction and brings the child back to normal consciousness. The doctor's first impulse is to put an end to the whole distressing situa-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion by taking both the child and his mother away with him; but the situation has gone on too long now—the blow would be too terrible for the husband. And besides, the psychologist is a congenital bachelor, dependent for years on an adoring assistant, who jealously looks after him and keeps him out of trouble. He takes his leave again. The psychologist, who is a man of genius, can illuminate the woman's life, can give her a gifted child and by his art can make himself master of the child's mind and save his life; but he is also an egoist, absorbed by his career as an inspired scientific spellbinder and with the weaknesses of such a man. He could never take the lifelong responsibility for either the mother or the child, as the husband does—he can only come and go, and it is the husband who has both woman and child in the end, while the psychologist goes back to his eternally maladjusted life, leaving the woman as much as ever in love with him. "Not changed. Complete!" she exclaims almost joyfully, as she watches him from the window.

If this is the story Mr. Barry means to tell—and I am by no means sure that it is, such is the uncertainty of his touch in dealing with it—it seems to me that he has a first-rate theme out of which a first-rate comedy might have been made. The best parts of the play, in fact, *are* comedy—the relations between the silver-tongued doctor and his devoted hard-boiled secretary, for example. Gillespie the secretary, perfectly played by Osgood Perkins, is the only character through which Mr. Barry allows himself to exercise his skill at the American humorous "line"; the doctor and his secretary have just been making the inevitable social rounds in the university town—"HAY. Bring a chair, Gillespie. GILLESPIE. Not me. I ate Mrs. William A. Plant's chicken salad and drank her cocoa. HAY. I was wiser. EVE. I think you behaved beautifully, both of you. GILLESPIE. Why's she called 'Mrs. William *A.* Plant'? Is there another Mrs. Plant? A William H.? Or Willy K.—? EVE. Not that I know of. GILLESPIE *(thoughtfully)*.—And still always Mrs. William A. Plant. H'm—.—Oh, well, why not? *(He goes out again into the library, with the books, sweater, hat and brief case.)*" And the best scene in the play, it seems to me, is that in which the psychologist says goodbye for the last time—he pulls out his watch to see how near it is to train time and finds that the crystal has come out again. It has been coming out for years, he says—he is always hoping it will break so that he can get a new one, but all it does is come out. Why? asks Eve. Because it doesn't fit. She asks him for the first time how he lives and, speaking matter-of-factly for the first time, he tells her that he lives in hotels, that he works most of the day and that he doesn't sleep at night. Then he and Gillespie catch the train.

The greater part of "Tomorrow and Tomorrow" is, however, unfortunately not at all like this. Mr. Barry is apparently laboring under the handicap of being acutely conscious most of the time that he is writing a bang-up serious play—he has aimed at an austerity and brevity, which somehow turn out most unnatural. For example, it is not very long after Gillespie has gone out of the room and left Eve and the doctor together in the scene quoted from above that Eve remarks to the doctor: "I have been at such pains about this little supper." This might be a bad translation of Ibsen or Strindberg—some of O'Neill sounds like that, too, and it may be by way of O'Neill that Barry has caught this way of talking—but it is not what an American woman like Eve would be likely to say about a little supper. And most of the dialogue is in this unconvincing vein. Doctor Hay is evidently intended to have a considerable element of ham about him, but the scenes between him and Eve—finely played as they are by Zita Johann and Herbert Marshall—have a banal and ham-romantic quality which makes it impossible to take them seriously, at the same time that none of the lines is ever clearly underlined as comic. "HAY. It [the wine] tastes of sun and rain and earth. EVE. Good things to taste of."—"Is the laurel in bloom, Eve?" etc.

It is curious to see Schnitzler's "Affairs of Anatol" after "Tomorrow and Tomorrow." Schnitzler is always perfectly sure of what he is doing—he knows how to make his characters sympathetic and ridiculous at the same time, and the one sentimental scene in the play is not overdone and does not jar with the rest. We speculate on what Schnitzler might have done with Eve and Dr. Hay—how he would have made us laugh at the lecturer's easy poetry and his weakness and at Eve's naïveté without losing either the romance of their meetings or the pathos of their partings. Yet the trouble is not simply that Mr. Barry is an inferior dramatist to Schnitzler: after all, Schnitzler is no giant, but he has a sounder culture behind him. Precisely where the Americans show up worst is in the department of high comedy—or lightly handled tragedy—which Barry is essaying. The case of Philip Barry is strikingly like that of Clyde Fitch: Clyde Fitch's straight comedy was excellent—original and authentically American; but as soon as he set out to be serious, he became stilted, commonplace, insupportable. He suffered evidently from a deep-seated assumption that being serious was something different from being comic—he didn't realize that comedy ought to be serious in the first place and that no amount of sentimentality and heaviness could ever make his most emotional scenes anything other than pretentious. Barry's plays, like certain other things in New York—like Cole Porter's songs, like a good deal in The New Yorker—have the deftness and a glimmering of the comic sense which are the products of a high civilization, but like other things of the kind in New York, they remain imperfect, uncertain, unsatisfactory, because they have no stable social system behind them and consequently no definite code of manners or point of view. They drift about on the surface of a heterogeneous city, itself as shifting as they, and they are at their best when they are exploiting the flickering of its surface. To write a really first-rate comedy, you have to have some fixed definite standards, even if those of a small class or group, to refer people's behavior to. O'Neill, for all his faults, has these for the whole of humanity; Schnitzler has them for the cultivated pre-war Viennese. But poor Philip Barry, writing for a sophisticated class with no real social tradition and very little education—his play has no more to do with the Indiana town in which its scene is laid than Cole Porter's "New Yorkers"—has a hard time putting his finger on anything which will enable him to take a definite line in regard to all the curious things which he sees going on about him.

EDMUND WILSON.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Position of the Progressive

The recent articles by Edmund Wilson and George Soule ("An Appeal to Progressives," The New Republic, January 14, and "Hard-boiled Radicalism," January 21) have stimulated a number of persons not on the staff of The New Republic to comment or reply, and some of their statements will be published in our columns. The first two, by Robert Hallowell and Kenneth Burke, appear below. The next two comments will be those of Matthew Josephson and Benjamin Ginzburg.—THE EDITORS.

I. Americanize America!

EDMUND WILSON'S "Appeal to Progressives" is a stirring, important and brave appeal—brave in candor, brave in confession of defeat. But his counsel is the counsel of panic and despair. Except for his chief conclusion (to "take Communism away from the Communists"), and the general absence of high hat which has always characterized his work, the article is a typical example of liberal cerebration—nine columns of analysis, indictment and arraignment, profoundly felt and on the whole convincing, and one column, nearly, of unconvinced and unconvincing cure. That the Communist part of the cure strikes me as quackery is beside the point. Which is, that something hopeful has happened when one of the best brains (and, I think, the best brain) of the younger liberal generation climbs down from the liberal's easy heaven of scolding, admits liberal intellectual futility and pulls up short with an appeal for a new tack.

That Herbert Croly and what he stood for must be rejected in order to take the new tack, seems to me indicative only of panic and bankruptcy. Although Mr. Wilson admits that Croly never abandoned his "original position" (he never had one in the static sense this phrase implies), he recounts how, "as time went on, Croly came to lose hope" (presumably in that position), and cites "his acute distress over the failure of Wilson at Paris" and "his increasing skepticism and indifference to politics" as proof thereof. That, I think, is a complete misconception of the facts. Croly's distress over the failure at Paris was due to his instant perception that this failure would so "muddy the waters" (his own phrase at the time, as I recall) as to make difficult, if not impossible, for years to come the application of progressive principles to American life. With a clairvoyance which in retrospect seems to me utterly astonishing, he foresaw that the debacle of the Peace was but the prelude to a long period of moral disintegration, during which his basically moral appeal would inevitably fall on deaf ears. The War, to him, was "an interruption"; likewise, as it turned out, the Peace. No, if Herbert Croly ever came to lose hope, it was not in his vision, but in the chance he would have to apply it, or see it applied.

I call it vision. Croly would not have liked the word. Vision, to him, would have suggested necromancy, something far from that "scientific attitude of mind" which he held so high. But vision is what he had, what distinguished him from most of the hard-boiled wiseacres about him, and what made him, moreover, one of the few full-fledged intellectuals of his time. That vision was born of an imagination as uncannily acute where his interest was engaged as it was obtuse where it was not engaged. With it, he penetrated to the very roots and sources of American life. With it, he sensed the slow-moving current of the life blood of our emerging nation. With it, he knew, as few men before or since have known, the American direction—the promise of American life.

If this sounds like a defense of Herbert Croly's work, I can only say that I am not concerned with its defense. It needs none. And if it needed any, there are others qualified, as I certainly am not, to defend it. But I am concerned to see a man, to whom many of us have been turning more and more of late with special hope, fumble, as it seems to me, however bravely, the chance of a decade, turn a naïve glance to Moscow, and discard, like an undergraduate chafing at the exigencies of his professor, the surest source of light on a dark horizon.

May I be permitted a naïve glance toward Moscow? May I recall that it is comparatively easy in the early years of any venture, when all's to be gained and nothing lost, when all's ahead and nothing behind, for a man or a group or a nation to possess that elan, that sureness and fool optimism, that place to go, which is the birthright of the innovator the world over? Mr. Wilson watches ten-dollar-a-week Mr. Communist Foster make noble Ham Fish and his honorable Committee look like bad nickels. Elan! Robin and David Kinkead have been infected too: America looks very stale to them. Elan! What right has another land than ours to this American perquisite of America's Manifest Destiny?

So Mr. Wilson advises us to "take Communism from the Communists, and to take it without ambiguities or reservations." But there is a catch, and what looks to me like a wholesale reservation. Those of us who are to do the taking are those who "repudiate the Marxian dogma and the strategy of the Communist party." We are to be hot-foot Communists, that is, without any nasty dictatorship of the proletariat; Communists out "to prove that the Marxian Communists are wrong"; Communists sure (or almost sure) "that there is still some virtue in American democracy." May we not hope that Comrade Stalin will decorate us promptly with the Sacred Order of the Tsar?

All you want that the Communists have, Mr. Wilson, is their elan. We can't take that over, even if we were ungenerous enough to do so. We have got to create our own elan. And, strange to say, I know no one better qualified than you to do the creating. Plow through Croly's works again, appropriate his vision (you are one of the few who can), recapture his faith and prepare to speak. Forget your damned public. It will come to you running the second you have something to say. Certainly, you have not said it yet. "What we need in this country is a genuine opposition": substitute Vice President Marshall's five-cent cigar, and the observation would be no less obvious and even more recent. "Ultimate government ownership of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the means of production": my grandfather used to roar for that when I was in short pants. A new Constitution and Declaration—university debating team, 1908. *Write 'em!*

We don't need an Ivy Lee to sell Communism to America: we need a New Republic to sell America to America. We need to be told and retold, until it is grasped, that America also, as well as Russia, is in the midst of an experiment; that we are in a very critical stage of that experiment; that there is neither time nor place in this land for those who seek to wreck that experiment; that this applies equally to the capitalist who buys laws and the legislator who sells them, to the Communist who by revolution would himself become the law; and that our experiment, because it is an experiment in democracy, and well advanced, is a thousand times harder to work out, and a thousand times more worth while to work out, than any experiment conducted by a dictatorship that rests on force.

We need to be told that the fundamental reason for the present crisis is that the entire population, high, low, rich, poor, capital, labor, white collarite and criminal, has been on a twelve-year debauch of racketeering. That racketeering is the art of giving the least possible for the most possible, or nothing for a lot, if possible. That the solution for the crisis is a complete right-about-face: giving the most possible for the least possible, or a lot for nothing, if possible. That, apart from a handful of people too interested in their work to bother with trivialities, those who have not racketeered have refrained only because they could not get in on any racket. But that the spirit of the racket has been the spirit of America since the racket of the Peace.

And will so continue to be, in spite of the wiseacreism about "the end of an epoch," unless those who are capable of leadership assume leadership. Leadership will have been assumed when the present crisis is seen in relation to and justly measured against what I have clumsily called the slow-moving current of our national life. When it is so seen and measured, two conclusions will instantly emerge. One: that, in spite of all the misery and suffering of these days, there is neither reason nor place for discouragement and panic, because the "muddy waters" have been, for the moment at least, cleared. And, two, that there is no time to be lost. Liberals, for the first time in more than a decade, are in the position that Croly longed for and dreamed possible as a result of the clean peace he had fought for: they are in the position to carry forward their own giant task—the Americanization of America.

That work is not going to be carried forward by discarding politics. For politics is the American instrument, and there is no substitute for it except force. It is not going to be carried forward by a mild flirtation with Communism. Nor by sitting weepily on the side lines and remarking that "John Dewey has just proposed to Senator Norris that he lead a new political party." Nor by brave confessions. Nor by new shibboleths, however shocking.

That work is not going to be carried forward by the old liberal assumption that something important has been accomplished merely by showing up the other fellow's weaknesses. Americans prefer the active and sincere asininities of Ham Fish to the most telling description of his trembling hands. And they are right. The day of the scintillating scolder is past. His place has been usurped by the entertainers, the Menckens, the Vanity Fairs and the New Yorkers. The critic's place now is in the arena, and his measure of usefulness what he can do there.

That work is not going to be carried forward by repeating liberalism's past mistake and betting on labor. It was always an opportunist and sentimental bet, as false to the liberals' central conviction (in the existence and desirability of fluid, non-stratified, non-permanent classes), as a corresponding bet on capital would be today. A victory on the part of labor, in its present state of mind and enlightenment, would do no more to realize the promise of American life than a new victory on the part of capital. (My own view is that it would do less.) Both are shot through with the spirit of the racket, and both have got to be purged by the lash of the law before we can clean up the economic battle front, and move on toward those fronts, educational and cultural, which ought to be, and with leadership could be today, occupying our energies.

The Americanization of America will begin to be carried forward when a program has been drawn up for the accomplishment of the impossible: namely, not merely the creation of an opposition, but the assumption to power by that opposition not later than 1936. Fantastic? Croly, I think, would have said so, and The New Republic today, I think, will say so. And in so saying will reveal its (and his) fundamental weakness: preference for and reliance upon cloistered cerebration, and fear of action. (As I write this sentence, the postman brings me George Soule's "Hard-boiled Radicalism." At a glance I see that certain things I have tried to say here are infinitely better said by him. Magnificent—a crystal globe flung into the air. But cloistered cerebration, as usual. "What is required . . . is . . . more vigorous steps. . . ." Hell! What are they? Define them. *No, take them!)*

If there is one shred of justification for the elementary American assumption that Americans are capable of recognizing and will support an American program, there is justification for this effort. (Already undertaken, be it noted, not by The New Republic, but by a grand young American, somewhat over seventy, cloistered professor, John Dewey.) The program will divide itself into two parts: objectives and methods of achievement. The first part will contain one column of indictment and nine columns of cure. And will be prefaced by a statement to the effect that what is sought is the regulation of the capitalist system in the interest of social justice and the preservation of the American democratic ideal. The only item of cure that I propose to suggest is: Cards on the Table. The cards of industry—not merely cryptic balance sheets and profit-and-loss accounts, but pay rolls (including salaries and incomes of owners and officers), dividends, reserve funds, surplus and costs—the *whole works* must by law be, in the industry, public property. Thus, and only thus, will it ever be known whether or not organized capital and organized labor (the elementary right of labor to organize, to strike and to picket is assumed to be guaranteed by the law) can compose their differences under the capitalistic system. If, with all cards on the table, they cannot compose their differences, the ultimate recourse is evident.

Until this experiment is tried let us, for heaven's sake, stop dallying with revolution. Either we believe in the American democratic experiment (and this includes capitalism, regulated but not abolished, private initiative, fluid

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

class lines, and all the rest), or we do not. If we believe the experiment to be played out and done for, the only honest thing to do is what John Reed did, go over openly to the Communists, and work for their revolution and dictatorship. The present proposal he would probably have called "patching up the old machine." Several years' residence in Europe (I have never been to Russia), has given me, for all the bread lines that exist today, a wholesome respect for "the old machine." No other machine has ever done more, or nearly so much, for so many people. That it is in frightful need of repair is obvious.

It is also obvious, as I have already remarked, that there is no time to be lost. Not only will nation-wide racketeering recommence, and prepare the way for another so-called depression, but something even more insidious and sinister will happen: there will be no chance for the creation of an opposition, in power or out. Let liberal demoralization continue, let liberal leaders continue "to work in a vacuum" (the phrase is Croly's), and the stage will be inevitably set for that most stupid, most avoidable and most destructive of wars—the open class conflict. Revolution can change ownership, and there is no question that, if it comes to America, ownership will eventually devolve upon our "proletariat." But it is yet to be proved that the substitution of one class of owners for another automatically entails a raising of the cultural level. Educated people who have been in the habit of passing up The New Republic, and The Survey, and The Nation as a little too red for their blood, or a little too highbrow, or a little too hard, will do well now to think twice before passing them up again. For the people back of these journals, for all the grousing I've just heaped on one of them, are the sole considerable bulwark between the free America we profess to love, and the decidedly unfree America which one day is bound to follow if these journals and what they stand for are ignored out of existence.

Since finishing this diatribe, I have read George Soule's piece. By all the rules of logic and self-preservation, mine ought to be promptly consigned, by me, to the mercies of my furnace. It is presumptuous to ask you to print it in the same columns that can be graced by such a display of wisdom and taste, of wide learning and clarity of expression, of knock-your-eye-out profundity. Yet I am foolhardy enough to ask you to print it (and this addendum into the bargain, if you care to), albeit not foolhardy enough to think you will, for in Mr. Soule's performance you give us the arch example, beside which Mr. Wilson's pales, of (what I dared at a glance to call it) cloistered cerebration. Mr. Wilson got within hailing distance of the arena; at least it was "we," in his piece, who were "to confute the Marxian cynicism," and so on. Here, by the lord Harry, it is "they" who are "to redouble their efforts to learn," "they" who are to take "more vigorous steps."

I translated Mr. Soule's article in my awful French to my wife (French being still our household language), that I might have her judgment as to whether or not I should submit my piece. "It is a shame," she remarked at the end, "that thy love, The New Republic, does not carry illustrations. Thou couldst make such a beautiful drawing to decorate Mr. Soule's article. It would show an old woman in great pain on her bed, and beside her a vast and important doctor, high hat in hand, ready to depart. 'I have determined, Madame,' the caption would read, 'after exhaustive examination, that you have swallowed your false teeth. They are at the moment located in the right ventricle of the large intestine. I would advise you to take vigorous steps to disembarrass yourself of their presence there. Au revoir, Madame, and good luck.'"

ROBERT HALLOWELL.

II. Boring from Within

A FEW years ago? Why! not many months have passed since the time when the critics of our society had fallen upon a lean season. I mean that much was wrong, and that many people knew that much was wrong, but it was a dismal day for saying so. One could criticize capitalism only by non-capitalist standards. Judged by theological attitudes, by doctrines of refinement, by theories of valid cultural ends, the tendencies of our society were vulnerable. But such reasoning was ludicrously frail as a force to counteract the drive of prosperity itself. The scramble was on—and the more zestfully one entered the scramble, the greater booty he might pull out of it. To this there was no answer.

Now that the situation has changed, one no longer needs to adopt tenuous religious or cultural ideals as a way of attacking capitalism. One can attack capitalism by the ideals of capitalism itself. One can, in one's rebuttal, use such words as prosperity, material acquisitions, increased consumption, expansion, higher standards of living. This is a grim time for rejoicing—but it is good to know that an absurdity will finally become an absurdity, even by its own code of values. And when it does so, we must scrupulously make certain that those business men who in recent years had become business brains are consistently and effectively taunted for their difficulties. It is our pious duty to make them squirm—not through vindictiveness, but by way of impairing their dangerous authority in the future.

In Edmund Wilson's "Appeal to Progressives" in a recent number of The New Republic, he takes account of these matters, and makes certain suggestions as to what should follow the present debacle. "We have talked about the desirability of a planned society," he writes; "the phrase 'social control' has been our blessèd Mesopotamian word. But if this means anything, does it not mean socialism? And should we not do well to make this perfectly plain?" And he concludes:

> I believe that if the American radicals and progressives who repudiate the Marxian dogma and the strategy of the Communist party hope to accomplish anything valuable, they must take Communism away from the Communists, and take it without ambiguities or reservations, asserting that their ultimate goal is the ownership of the means of production by the government and an industrial rather than a regional representation.

This, he says, would involve an open confession "that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are due to be supplanted by some new manifesto and some new bill of rights." And such opposition "must dissociate its eco-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nomics completely from what is by this time a purely rhetorical ideal of American democracy."

Thus he advocates: the nationalization of industry; the frank identifying of this program as socialism or as communism; and, as a corollary, the scrapping of the Constitution and the avowed repudiation of American democracy as "a purely rhetorical ideal." While not many of us are sufficiently well placed to be greatly disturbed by this program, I do find two primary objections which might be brought against it. The first I might call an absolute objection—the second an objection on the grounds of expediency.

My absolute objection, like the absolute objection to capitalism in times of prosperity, looks much the weaker. So I shall dispose of it first, as I lay little weight upon it, and fear that it will convince no one. This objection is an objection to flags. The West has been forever plagued by its orgies of enthusiasm, of faith, of evangelizing, of Christian soldiering—aspects all of standard-bearing which I should group under the heading of flags. Occidental history has been the pitting of one drive against another. We must cease to value the inspirational, for it is the easiest thing of which a man is capable. Deprive him of a meal, or bind his arms, or let him see someone driving off with his car, or give him a ticket to a football game—and behold, he is terrifically inspired. Our ideas are but the intellectual backing for the biological convictions of the daisy—we think in the directions in which we feed. And so, having learned by the archives that the world has gone from flag to flag, I wonder whether the difficulty might be attributed to flags in general, and thus might be found in communistic flags as well as capitalist ones.

Essentially, I mean, we must be rescued by attitudes anterior to political or economic policies. Political and economic policies will be but methods of putting these attitudes into effect. And I would ask that the erroneous attitudes now latent in our society be attacked—that the doctrines of inspiration, of faith, of optimism, of evangelism, of energy, of warlike advancement, be undermined to the extent that the imagination of our artists is capable of undermining them. If we could, for instance, but ruin men's interest in unnecessary material acquisitions, from this one change alone vast economic alterations would follow of themselves.

But such a little change is in reality a tremendous change. I am asking that we change human nature. And despite what the behaviorists have taught us about "conditioning," we know that any basic changing of human nature would be at best a long and arduous process. My absolute objection clearly cannot be considered for the present season. It is Utopian, it is impractical, it does not apply. I concede it: by all means, if we are to work with surety, let us not attempt something so Utopian as the reshaping of human nature. We will be strongest if we can change the situation for the better while leaving people's minds exactly as they were. To be immediately effective, we must promote changes which can be put into effect by utilizing the mentality already at hand. We must be realistic, we must be expedient—which brings me to my second objection.

For is it expedient to ask Americans that they adopt a new flag? Is it expedient that we should deliberately go out of our way to ally an economic program with names which many people fear more strongly than they fear sinister and gloomy vices? Is it expedient to advocate nationalization of industry in a country less given to such notions than any other spot on earth? In Mr. Wilson's "Appeal" he referred to Communism's need of a publicity agent. Yet he knows as well as I that the first act of such a publicity agent would be to name the new program the Home Policy, to call nationalization of industry "popular participation," to carry on a nation-wide "educational" campaign denying up and down that the program had anything on God's earth to do with the nationalization of industry—and as for a repudiation of the Constitution, his suggestions in The New Republic have already made it imperative that the publicity agent distribute free framed copies of the Constitution to anyone sending name and address to the Home Policy headquarters. And the slogans, incidentally, would be: "Against all brands of socialism and communism; against nationalization of industry; for the scientific development of popular participation; for the upholding of the Constitution by conservative modernization."

No, Mr. Wilson makes the mistake that radicalism has always made in America. He would transplant Old World notions verbatim, without national adaptation. His position is analogous to the Communists' attack upon religion. In Russia, where people were generally illiterate, the Church was undeniably a major power in upholding the old regime. But in America, where most of our illiterates can read, what is the propaganda value of the Church compared with that of our magazines and newspapers? To attack the Church is to alienate the populace unnecessarily, since the attack arouses much resentment without in any way affecting the main channels of propaganda. The publicity agent you speak of would make no such mistakes. The Home Policy will not, like Foster Before Fish, insist that its advocates be atheists. It will embrace all creeds. It will regret that some of the clergy still remain aloof, but will proclaim the profoundest respect for their sincerity, and will await with confidence the final alliance between clergy and Homism. Indeed, in discussing the steadily growing popularity of Homist doctrines among the clergy, our publicity agent will point out that the movement is spreading from the top downwards and that already the better paid ministers have expressed sympathy.

Zestful antagonism has been the bane of radicals in America. They court resentment. Consider the heroic but ill adapted strategy in Gastonia. America is the country of "boring from within." Our Western progressives know this only too well. If you want to attack the Republican party, become a Republican. Above all, since we have renounced the absolute and are considering the expedient, let us respect the flags. And let us remember that "nationalization of industry," communism and scrapping the Constitution are woefully bad flags in America.

But how, respecting the flags, could we effect the changes Mr. Wilson advocates? A little reading of recent editorials in The New York Times may give us some hints. We may look among its editorials, where so many tactful distinctions have been drawn lately between the horrible un-American indignity of receiving an unemployment stipend from the government and the fine flower of human hauteur that comes of standing in a breadline or

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

selling apples with a Humility Label in your hat. Note how The Times falls into sudden admiration of Harmless Herbert for his protests against "raids on the Treasury." Read its somewhat non-sequitur applause to the gambling-in-human-misery slogan (non-sequitur, I call it, because I could never understand who would be made miserable, except perhaps our big financiers, by large governmental expenditures). Observe The Times praying that the country be spared an extra session of Congress. And all, so far as I can see, because of one colossal risk: if the difficulties continue, and Congress remains in session, the loosening of the Treasury's purse strings is bound to follow. The policy would be established; it could lead anywhere; but it would lead for certain to an increased tax on large incomes.

This is our cue. Why niggle with all the dangerous flags that are brandished in Mr. Wilson's article? Why not advocate something very close to a single tax on large incomes? Why not advocate a gradual extension of the tax on large incomes as the basic method of raising revenues?

Mark me: I do not say that we can run up the taxes on large incomes in a day. I am merely saying that it is much nearer to American practices than general nationalization of industry. I am saying that it needs no new flag. I am saying that the very elements which put the Sixteenth Amendment into the Constitution are still at hand to back its more thoroughgoing use. And if the principle were but carried far enough, it would be the equivalent of nationalization—the equivalent, but not the word.

I have been astounded that the Sixteenth Amendment was ever passed. I have been still more astounded that the Supreme Court has not found some way of declaring it unconstitutional. Indeed, in the interests of capitalist consistency I should like to point out that the Supreme Court can still do so. It has but to sacrifice the constitutionality of the Eighteenth Amendment. It can uphold the decision of the New Jersey judge, and declare that the method of ratification by state legislature is not the correct procedure when dealing with amendments affecting the curtailment of "rights," and thus the income-tax amendment will be nullified. And there will be such a general to-do over the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment that nobody will pay any attention to the vanishing of the Sixteenth.

Meanwhile, the Sixteenth Amendment is on the statutes. In view of which, we should act as follows:

We must all become Republicans and Democrats, members of Tammany Hall in New York, members of the Vare organization in Philadelphia, shaking hands with the worst of them, frequenting their speakeasies, gambling in their dens, attending their churches, patronizing their brothels. We must join Rotary Clubs; we must play checkers at the Y. M. C. A. We must demand unceasingly the expulsion of Reds. We must be conformity itself. And occasionally, over drinks and a cigar, we must say lightly to our boon companions (training ourselves to forget that we would like to strangle them), we must say lightly, "Why don't the big fellows have to part with a little more of their incomes in times like these?" We would speculate at random as to how much deprivation a man might suffer by receiving only ten millions a year instead of forty—whereupon we should fall to denouncing the Reds rabidly, and end in a swoon of expansionistic delight as we pictured America conquering all Europe with a handful of Marines. Such should be our recipe. We should never weaken. And we should never speech-make.

More important still, we must go among the farmers, asking them questions. They will tell us not to plant potatoes at the dark of the moon—or is it the other way round? They will have strong views on the tuberculin test, and we will take our lesson meekly. And we'll attack the Reds, and nationalization of industry, and atheists (though the Constitution, bless us, was written and adopted by atheists)—and we'll slip in a few words about the income tax. The tax on big incomes (smilingly) would never hurt the farmer! In fact, why shouldn't the farmer be protected at the expense of industrialists? And then ask about pests on the apple—for the farmer can tell you some interesting things about pests on the apple, and the sooner our radicals learn to respect the farmer's lore, the sooner the worst is over.

It is in the farm states that we may hope for a haven for our activities, if these activities are properly conducted. Let us abandon this inefficient business of holding out skulls to be cracked in the labor disputes of industrial communities—and let us recognize that *among the farmers, the only surviving American conservatives,* the anti-industrialist movement must be fostered. It is among the farmers that we may hope to see developed the single tax on large incomes—which is to say the single tax on industry—and the principle could thereafter spread among the industrial workers.

But at this point I must qualify. I am not saying that this plan is within easy reach. I am not even saying that it is possible. I am simply pointing out that it marks in no fundamental ways a departure from our flags. For I have long hesitated to recommend it, and I would even now not recommend it, had not Edmund Wilson's "Appeal" recommended out-and-out nationalization. Only if nationalization can be considered seriously do we have reason to consider seriously the equivalent of nationalization through large income taxes.

As for rebuttal: If this principle were carried into effect with any thoroughness, would it not be true that we should destroy the basic props of American industry? Would not the vast funds flowing into the national treasury eventually require some form of redistribution among the people—and would not such redistribution amount in the end to the giving of doles even where doles were not needed? In giving doles where they are needed, do we necessarily put a premium upon idleness?

I do not know. I can only say that I devoutly hope so. As for our destroying the basic props of American industry, American industry has given us little cause to feel tender about its collapse, if we can but be sure that the collapse does not bring down the vast populace with it as it is now doing. Perhaps a few "basic props" of American industry might be destroyed for the good of all. For if man backs mechanical efficiency with our present philosophy of work and earning, for instance, he is headed for an endless succession of "saturation points." The philosophy of work and earnings that underlies American industry goes best with a paucity and inefficiency of tools, but a philosophy of leisure is all that can spare this wealth-glutted, poverty-stricken system.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We might even advocate that the dole be made the norm. Those who were sufficiently unhappy or uncultured to desire working their heads off by running around an economic circle should be permitted to do so, and at a profit—but such an insult to the Creator should not be a terrifying necessity, as it is today. Leisure is a norm in South Sea climates (or was before our bankers saddled the natives with public debts), and perhaps leisure will have to become a norm in the new climate made by machinery. Perhaps leisure is not merely a privilege of our society—perhaps it has become an economic necessity. And the only way that the present ugly phase of leisure: namely, unemployment, can be converted into the cultured phase of unemployment: namely, leisure, is by the turning over of industry's excess profits to the idle members of society (whether they are idle through inclination or necessity does not matter).

Yet we are getting dangerously near the absolute with which we began. And we do so in this wise: we saluted generous congressional appropriations as sufficient for the moment (happy to think that we can base so much upon the recommendations of the Ninety Prominent Economists to the President). We assumed that such congressional appropriations would sooner or later involve the increase of taxation on large incomes. We then asked that all radicals join the major parties and appeal within the party for further extensions of the income-tax principle until carried to a point where it served as a means of gradual nationalization. We conceded what seems to be a fear of The Times, that the principle of the dole could easily be extended until it became a menace to present business efficiency—since much of the drive behind capitalism at present, so far as the lowest kinds of employment go, is undoubtedly fostered by the terror of joblessness. But we welcomed the destruction of industrialist hegemony and industrialist thinking. And this brings us back to a "philosophy," back to advocating a certain attitude which is prior to economics or policies. So, while recommending the expedient doctrine of nationalization through increased taxation of big incomes, we find that we must still invest, for the "long pull," in the absolute doctrine of flaglessness, lack of driving ambition, loss of interest in a powerful advance towards nowhere.

Flags may still be needed to combat flags, but the triumph of the last flag should coincide with the triumph of flaglessness. If there is ever a millennium, it will be the reign of doubt. If the future is to be made livable, it will be made livable by our questioning everything but the certainties of the body itself, the dogmas of animal functioning. Our thinking must not be, as it now is, a simple reënforcement of such instincts of self-preservation and aggrandizement as we acquired in the jungle. Above brute faith, upon native inspiration, upon love of conformity, we must erect indolence, sloth, the idle curiosity which appears at its best in the skepticism and inquiries of pure science.

So, behind the immediate haggles of politics and economics, lies the artist's business of undermining the cannibalistic beliefs which are ruining our civilization. Beneath a seasonal economic ill lies a basic cultural ill, a mistake in human aspirations, a bad ideological adjustment to the situation in which we happen to be placed—and art can do no greater service to society than by causing the disintegration of such attitudes, by making propaganda difficult, by fostering intellectual distrust. We must de-occidentalize the West. We must promote such attitudes as cancel the tremendous powers we have accumulated. Certainties may be used as expedients, if they are expediently applied—but the theoretical end must be the renunciation of all certainty. For we can depend upon it that even a world rigorously schooled in doubt would still be dogmatical enough.

KENNETH BURKE.

CORRESPONDENCE

Wright and the Chicago Fair

SIR: The omission of Frank Lloyd Wright from the proposed World's Fair of '33 in Chicago is nothing less than a calamity. Even the academicians of '93 did not dare leave out Sullivan, and the Commissioners for '33 are supposed not to be academicians. . . . Two arguments for Wright's exclusion have, I believe, been advanced. One is that he is difficult to work with, the other that his architecture does not "conform." Whatever element of truth there may be in the first does not outweigh the fact that he is the greatest living architect. As to the second, "conform" to what? One look at the heterogeneous designs of the Commissioners, ranging from Paris '25 to neo-Romantic by way of a what's-it-behind-the-trees, convinces one that the fear is not about Wright's conformity but of his ability.

The Commission has hinted that it may give Wright a corner to do. Well, in '93 Louis Sullivan got a building, the door of which is all anyone remembers of that Fair. It would be better not to give Wright anything, and let this Fair be remembered as the one from which he was omitted, rather than just to give him a corner from which the cultured world could laugh at the rest.

New York City. HENRY S. CHURCHILL.

The St. Lawrence Ship Canal

SIR: Inasmuch as the construction of the St. Lawrence ship canal is about to be discussed by the United States and Canadian governments, the public should be informed on this important subject. One of the most exhaustive studies of this problem has been made by the Brookings Institution, the results of which have been published in "The St. Lawrence Navigation and Power Project," by Dr. Moulton and associates.

The authors find that the construction of the St. Lawrence ship canal with a twenty-seven-foot channel is economically unsound because "the annual overhead charges against the waterway, that is, interest and depreciation on the capital investment and maintenance and operation of the route, would amount, when figured on the most conservative basis, to approximately $40,000,000 . . . which means that the taxpayers are to contribute about $3.50 per ton for the benefit of such shippers as would use the route. . . . Thus, in order to effect a reduction of four cents per bushel in the cost of moving grain, taxpayers in general would have to contribute approximately eleven cents per bushel." But in order to sustain their position, the authors charge against the navigation project not only the cost of improving the St. Lawrence River for navigation purposes (estimated at $257,000,000), but also the cost of improving lake channels and harbors (estimated at $340,000,000), as well as the cost of the Welland ship canal, now nearing completion (estimated at $115,000,000), making a total estimated cost of $712,000,000 for the St. Lawrence navigation project.

All improvements to navigation in the lakes have been made heretofore for the benefit of the traffic thereon, now exceeding 150,000,000 tons per year, and there is no need of further lake improvements to accommodate the 10,500,000 tons estimated by the authors to move over the St. Lawrence ship canal. From an economic standpoint, there is no more reason for charging the cost of lake improvements and the Welland ship canal against the St.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lawrence navigation project than for so charging the cost of the Soo canal, or other past improvements made in the lakes. From an international standpoint, the cost of the Welland ship canal and certain other lake improvements will undoubtedly have to be considered in apportioning the cost of the St. Lawrence project between the two governments.

Eliminating charges pertaining to lake channels, lake harbors and the Welland canal, the annual cost of operations justly chargeable against the St. Lawrence ship canal amounts to $14,350,000. This is equal to $1.37 per ton on the authors' estimated tonnage, equivalent to four cents per bushel, which happens to be their estimated savings that would be effected by permitting the present lake carriers to continue to Montreal—which they could do without any improvements to navigation, except those on the St. Lawrence, estimated by the authors at $257,000,000.

As the authors' estimated tonnage is only that estimated by the Department of Commerce, and only 50 percent more than the present St. Lawrence canal (fourteen-foot channel) carried in 1928, and as the traffic is reasonably certain to increase over a term of years while the heaviest operating charge (interest and depreciation) remains fixed, it is fair to conclude, using the authors' own data, that the construction of the proposed St. Lawrence ship canal is economically sound, notwithstanding their conclusions to the contrary.

New York City. PHILIP W. HENRY.

SIR: Mr. Henry's analysis involves a very obvious fallacy. He says first that there is no need of further lake improvements to accommodate the St. Lawrence tonnage. This could be true, however, only if the shipping on the route were to be confined to vessels that can enter lake harbors of twenty-two-foot depth. He contends next that the cost of deepening lake harbors (and the Welland Canal) to twenty-seven feet should be charged against lake traffic, because lake improvements in the past have been for the benefit of lake shipping. The fallacy in this is that twenty-two feet is sufficient for the most economical type of lake transportation (a fact which Mr. Henry elsewhere admits), and that the sole purpose of the twenty-seven-foot waterway is to permit ocean vessels to enter the lakes. As to the traffic estimate of the Department of Commerce, I need only say that this estimate was subjected to thorough criticism in the book, and if Mr. Henry still thinks it reasonable, he should show wherein our analysis of it is in error.

Washington, D. C. HAROLD G. MOULTON.

A Correction

SIR: In condensing my letter published in The New Republic of January 21, which announced the Conference on Permanent Preventives of Unemployment, the names of the Social Justice Committee of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference were, through no fault of mine, not mentioned as organizations also sponsoring the Conference. Will you kindly publish the fact that the Conference was held under their auspices as well as under those of the Federal Council of Churches?

New York City. JAMES MYERS.

Ovid and Mr. Colum

SIR: Mr. Dupee writes with bad authority in your issue of December 24 when, writing of Mr. Padraic Colum's "Orpheus," he says, "The inventions of his own imagination are often delightful—as, for example, this addition to the Greek myth of the flood: 'Men in their boats drew fishes out of the tops of elm trees, and the water nymphs were amazed to come on men's cities under the waves.'"

Mr. Colum, I should suppose consciously, was quoting Ovid:

"Ille supra segetes aut mersae culmina villae navigat, hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo . . . mirantur sub aqua lucos urbesque domosque Nereides. . . ."

New York City. ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

Lord Lytton and Mr. Brailsford

SIR: When I read Mr. Brailsford's article, "India under the Lathi," in The New Republic of December 10, I felt sure . . . that it would be exceedingly interesting if Lord Lytton, with his experience as Viceroy of India and Governor of Bengal and his great sympathy with a liberal attitude toward the many peoples of that great country, would express his opinion upon what Mr. Brailsford said. We had a long conversation on the subject.

Lord Lytton expressed his regret that Mr. Brailsford, in so short a time, should have arrived at conclusions which seemed to Lord Lytton so entirely at variance with the facts of the situation. Mr. Brailsford assumes that the Indian Nationalists have been driven to this policy of open sedition by the unsympathetic attitude of the government of India. This ignores the facts of the present situation. The truth is that we have definitely made it clear that we wish to establish self-government in India, and are now seeking the best way to amend the Government of India Act of 1919. What more could any government do in these circumstances than invite all parties in India to discuss with them in free and open conference the practical means of carrying out what Indian Nationalists desire? . . .

The proportion of the Indian element in the government has greatly increased in recent years, and today there is a mere handful of British officials in the country. If, as Mr. Gandhi suggests and as Mr. Brailsford apparently agrees, this mere handful of British is no longer required in the country, the matter could be very easily proved. Mr. Gandhi himself, said Lord Lytton, showed the way. If it were not for the services of the Indian soldiers and officials, and the acquiescence of the Indian people at present, the government could not last for a month. The fact is that the complete failure of Mr. Gandhi's appeal established to the whole world the most convincing proof that the present government in India rests on the sanction of the Indian people. Mr. Brailsford talks about coercion, and mentions that 60,000 persons are in prison today for political offenses, but he does not explain how any government could exist which tolerated sedition —for he admits that all these people are guilty of sedition—nor what justification there is for sedition in the present circumstances in India. The very object of the Round Table Conference was to discover the most effective way of achieving a result which these seditious persons profess to desire, yet Mr. Brailsford refers to the cables from London as describing the early days of this Conference as "an irrelevance." At the present moment the Congress party in India is particularly active in its seditious policy, because the Conference put the government in a good light. They therefore take such action as shall compel coercion.

Mr. Brailsford recommends the gesture of a general release of the Indian prisoners. This has been tried again and again, by Lord Lytton, his predecessors and his successors. When Lord Lytton, a short time after entering office, adopted this gesture, it was only to find that the men he had released were promoting murder and sedition. The same thing has happened with his successor, Sir Stanley Jackson, who released a number of men who have since had to be tried and incarcerated for violent conduct. . . .

It only remains again to emphasize, as Lord Lytton put it, that to establish in India a self-governing State with representative institutions, united by friendship and good will with themselves and acknowledging in a free partnership with the other dominions the mutual obligations of loyalty to a common sovereign, is as much the avowed goal of the British Parliament as of Indian Nationalists. But those who have laboriously and patiently built up such a system over hundreds of years are more conscious of the difficulties than are some impatient politicians who would achieve the end without perfecting the means. They know that national unity must precede national forms of government, and that national unity cannot be created by resolutions or legislative enactments. Their own experience in India has taught them the consequences of the weakening of the central government, and while with them it is a matter of honor to make parliamentary government as successful in India as they have made it in England, they have no intention of transferring the authority of government into hands that will not be strong enough to retain it.

London, England. HENRY S. LUNN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins, edited with notes by Robert Bridges. New York: Oxford University Press. 159 pages. $3.

A Vision of the Mermaids, by Gerard Manley Hopkins. New York: Oxford University Press. 4 pages. $7.50.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, by G. F. Lahey, S.J. New York: Oxford University Press. 172 pages. $3.

HIS VARIED destiny to go uncomprehended or ignored, condescended to or sincerely but cautiously admired, alternately reverenced as a radical experimenter or a religious mystic, regarded by still others as a mouthpiece for inspirational insanity, Gerard Manley Hopkins has now come into his own. The growing interest in his work has resulted in a second edition of his poems, augmented by some not included in the scarce 1918 volume edited by Robert Bridges, to whom credit must always be due for the original and painstaking presentation of his friend's work. These new poems contribute nothing to what has already been known of the quality of his writing, but serve by contrast to illustrate the progress of his experimenting. The introduction, written by Charles Williams, is one of the most discerning estimates of certain values in Hopkins that has yet appeared.

The companion volume by Father Lahey provides what few actual facts there are to record in a life in which conversion to the Roman Catholic Church and the decision to join the Jesuit Order were, one gathers, the chief and poignant events. What private reluctance it was that left nearly untouched the psychological phases of Hopkins' asceticism, what austerity passed over with only a few discreet hints his rare personal charm, his family and his relationships within the Order, one fails to learn, at the same time wishing no better medium for the task of delineation than Father Lahey's sensitive and unostentatious prose. The destruction by Hopkins himself of the diary which he had reserved for "spiritual phenomena" was, without doubt, a loss so serious that no mere inference along that line, however subtle, could take its place. The publication of the remaining diaries, devoted to more mundane notes, would go far toward rounding out the portrait of the priest, as man and artist.

"A Vision of the Mermaids" is a decorated facsimile of a poem written when the author was still at school, and hitherto published only in fragment. We have in this what is apparently the only example available of the poet's drawing. This is of such undeniable interest that it is to be hoped more may eventually be known of his talent. This one design, presuming it to be representative, is sufficient to dispel the legend of former reviewers, that he drew and painted in the manner of the Pre-Raphaelites.

His inventive views on verse rhythm and his simple elaboration of them should be sought in his own statement in the Author's Preface. He was aware of the obstacles to printing poetry with the directions and notations he desired, though he felt the need of having "a notation applied throughout as in music." It should be kept in mind that both in theory and in the practice of his new rhythm Hopkins dreamed of a functional similarity to music. To summarize—as a means of scanning he preferred falling to rising feet, took the stress first, and thus had two basic feet, the Trochee and the Dactyl, and a corresponding logaoedic rhythm, a mixture of the two. The reversal of feet, employed to avoid monotony, produces Counterpoint Rhythm, an attempt to superimpose one rhythm on the one already established, thus affording a contrapuntal effect, again a musical analogy. Since consistent counterpointing destroys the ground rhythm, we have, instead, Sprung Rhythm, measured by feet of from one to four syllables and using any number of slack syllables.

The effect, found in reading aloud, of emphasis or prolongation caused by the thrust of monosyllables, Dactyls, Trochees and Paeonic feet injects into an accentual language an element of time different from the ordinary time-equality of identical feet in orthodox verse, and similar to the prolongation of sound in music and the singing voice. That Hopkins meant to go this far is conjecture, but it is certainly possible to read some of his poems with such an effect, and he himself repeated the advice, "take breath and read it with the ears, as I always wish to be read, and my verse becomes all right." Further, he used every device he could find to break down the interference of line-ends and carry the poem as a continuous whole without divisions. Though he insisted that "design, pattern or inscape," in writing as in painting, was his main concern, he has no affinity for later experimentalists who have brought a visual element into modern rhythm, and whose rhythms need not always be read aloud to be enjoyed, but must certainly be seen where they lie to be appreciated. His rhythms, while they may suggest the subject, neither imitate nor parody it.

We heard much some years ago of the rhythms of common speech and of music and their superior merit for verse, but even in polyphonic prose, which made a definite attempt to be contrapuntal, there has been no modern poetry attaining to the amazing effect of lines in Hopkins. His mind discarded ordinary word sequences and grammatical arrangements, creating for itself an original order which has its own habits of ingenious displacement and irregularity, making sometimes grace and sometimes grandeur. He can halt a sentence, a verse, retard it with a broken preposition, then set it spinning with a participle to gather momentum until it collects its own climax. Verbal indulgences, so easily faults of diffuseness, are here less faults than a curious, purposive colliding and jamming, an overlapping and telescoping of images and words in an effort toward sustained music and sense. Extravagance of a kind is the inevitable result, but extravagance so integrated, so disciplined to intention, that the accomplishment never sinks to mere lavishness. The will is never relaxed.

Hopkins' poetry, as in "The Leaden and the Golden Echo" and "The Windhover," is instrumental. He tried to make it so without loss of intelligibility and wrote relatively few lines that require exegesis. He failed to understand why poets laureate and canons of the Church found his verses difficult. He revealed fresh potentialities in the musical employment of words, a music that being organic is, in its fundamental relation to actual movement, of much significance for future poetry. His alliteration, a thing quite apart from a superficial use of sound, is dynamic:

> . . . Yes I can tell such a key, I do know such a place,
> Where whatever's prized and passes of us, everything
> that's fresh and fast flying of us, seems to us
> sweet of us and swiftly away with, done away
> with, undone,
> Undone, done with, soon done with, and yet dearly
> and dangerously sweet
> Of us, the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-
> matchèd face,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too too apt to, ah! to fleet,
Never fleets móre, fastened with the tenderest truth
To its own best being and its loveliness of youth; it is an everlastingness of, O it is an all youth!

Among the early verses and Marian lyrics are poems of deft charm, containing no hint of the more orchestral and original manner except a few hyphens and a few verbal economies—that persistent habit of saving a pronoun to purchase a Niagara at some later moment.

His poetry, having its roots in faith, owes some of its finest fruit to mortal doubt. His mind was too subtle, too composite to be consistently the rhapsodist in worship, too objective and observant to maintain undisturbed the trance of identification between self and whole. Acceptance would break away into defeat and crisis. Whatever the mystical association of his writing, whatever the reference of symbol drawn directly from theology, those sonnets sometimes called "the terrible," Hopkins' most personal religious poems, remain not mystical but psychological, in the sense that they are not sublimated beyond sight, but are definitions of a state of mind, of frustration and doubt common to life. "We hear our hearts grate on themselves":

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.
Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.

There is a predictable strain of asceticism which continually returns, but prevailing with the courageous hunger of the spirit is a remarkable excess in another direction—things seen, heard, the shape of the world, the weight and color and taste of whatever the curious senses can grasp. It is a transformation of facts into something never untrue, but as surprising as a prophecy in its revelation. Never merely sensuous, his is yet a writing of sensation and of fascinated pleasure in the beauty and strangeness of matter. There is not a timid or neutral or really sober poem. So absorbing, however, was Hopkins' interest in the surface of earth that the result is in places an eloquence depending much on the seeing and assertive word. A further congestion is evident in the extreme concentration and the baffling austerity of style, which show a bright side in the lyrics and a dramatic simplification in the sonnets, but cannot always carry the burden of the close-packed thought.

Inevitably original and mutinous, his audacity betrayed him into awkward locutions: "Our heart's charity's hearth's fire, our thought's chivalry's throng's Lord." An almost violent translating of one form and object into terms of another, coupled with a continual liberating of sense and concept, make of this an oddly agitated poetry. Yet the strenuous lines clear suddenly under a stroke of sorcery, a flash of "wild hollow hoarlight," or resolve into heartiness with "long live the weeds and the wilderness."

Aside from its authenticity and its independent beauty, his poetry is fundamentally and deeply important because it is the expression of an inventive mind having something to add to the sum and method of creative writing. Thirty years before free verse was a recognized incident, he had already taken the next logical steps in the analysis of liberated verse forms. It is interesting to see that in at least one very noticeable use of the participle he even anticipated Miss Stein. Upon the sonnet he conferred a dignity grim beyond any it had known before, and the particular deformities he practised on his lyrics gave them an undeniable and new grace. Haunted by the impossible—to carry on two rhythms simultaneously—he at least came as near to it as verse can without verging upon delirium. He never achieved, in his experimental verse, the acute delicacy of later writers, but he did something more difficult—although, among the poet-theorists who came after him, there was repeated mention of the precedent of the choruses to "Samson Agonistes" and very little said about a Jesuit who claimed to write Sprung Rhythm better than Milton had.

He feared that he was "Time's eunuch," contriving nothing that could survive; but his poetry was essentially enlightened, honest and rebellious, and made to last. His loyalty as a priest was to emblem and heaven, but his choice as an artist was matter and mind. That common but most vital instinct of poetry—to fix things in their intensity and reality by recreating them in terms of other known things—entrusts the poet with identifying life by signs enduring past his own to a further day. This is not the work of fancy but of veracity. The cumulative effect of Hopkins' writing is of such veracity and reality, a priest true to heaven, a poet true to earth.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER.

College Sons—and Parents

Life in College, by Christian Gauss. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 272 pages. $2.50.

GOOD SENSE is rare enough to be called, for reasons that psychologists can explain, common sense. In the case of Dean Gauss—perhaps always when it exists in abundant measure—it is accompanied by humor and by so much experience that it has been funded into instinct. The humor, moreover, is not simply the good humor which is so near to sentimentality in its cheerful refusal to note facts; it is humor that penetrates, often mordantly, into the incongruities and contradictions of our civilization. The strain of hopefulness that tempers the account rendered of the modern undergraduate boy is, therefore, the more significant. The book is not an apologia for contemporary youth, nor a defense of the American college against its many critics. Indeed, the author admits to "a guilty feeling that in one respect it is almost unique. As a book dealing with an educational subject, it lacks something. It offers no cure for the many ills of our institutions of higher learning." And he adds, "If this volume seeks to reform anything or anybody, it is the American parent." This sentence tempts me to make a generalization which the author was too wise to make explicit. The things that are wrong with the American college—which he admits are many—are the things, fundamentally, that are wrong with American life in general.

It lacks the sense of perspective—and of humor—to criticize our higher institutions of learning as if they did not of necessity reflect, for evil as well as good, the conditions of American life. Dean Gauss's book is addressed even more to the parents of students than to the students themselves; its burden, on the whole, is that the larger part of the disciplinary cases, the misfits, the failures of boys in college, go back to the home. Students are overmothered and underfathered. Parents do not take the time or the pains to understand their offspring; they coddle too much, and they indulge in spasms of excessive harshness; misguided ambition leads them to send those to college who should never go (perhaps a third of the college population,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he thinks, should never have gone); they are both too lavish and too stingy with money.

The book closes, naturally and properly, with an examination to be taken by parents. Its thirteen questions are searching. One can only hope that they will be pondered by fathers and mothers having children in college and by those thinking of sending them. They sum up in concentrated form the possible "reform" of parents which Dean Gauss would like to see effected. The points made are illustrated throughout the book by the method of cases drawn from the Dean's own experience. Without this context of illustrative material a reviewer's summary would be dry and preachy—which the text never is. The Dean's examples enforce in one way and another the statement: "It is probable that because of the rapid changes which have come over the manners of youth, there are fewer fathers who are thoroughly comfortable in the presence of their sons and their sons' friends than there were twenty years ago. . . . Complete and sympathetic intelligence between them does not now seem to be the usual situation." This leads to the moral that "in general, the advances should come from the father."

There is a quality about the book which lifts it above the level of even sound advice and counsel to youth and parents. Dean Gauss sees that the troubles and ills of youth in college have their source, generally speaking, in conditions outside of college walls: first in the home, and then in the longer setting of American life that affects the home. In effect, this mode of treatment, even though it appears as an undercurrent, makes the book a critique of contemporary American society as revealed in the cross section of college life.

This phase of the book, although it is only implied, lends itself better to comment than does the shrewd and informed advice which the book abundantly supplies. I cannot refrain from quoting at length the closing sentences of the author's introduction: "In some respects, therefore, I feel that the college student has been maligned. His critics urge that conditions on the campus should be made to conform more nearly to conditions in the world outside, that he should be 'educated for life,' by which they mean usually for business life. Instead of attempting to force the college more narrowly into line with our social and economic system, I am compelled to wonder whether it would not be wiser, for a little while, to have such reformers direct their attention to a study of our somewhat hugger-mugger world outside with a view to bringing it a little more closely into accord with some of those finer aspects of human nature so frequently illustrated in the conduct of the average undergraduate."

Chapter V is entitled "The New World and the Undergraduate." It is here, and in the chapter on "Troubles at Home—Divorce," that Dean Gauss deals most explicitly with the connection between changes in the undergraduate situation and those in the world outside. There is the decay of romance: the literature which is read "appeals not to sentiment, but to the simpler, often more brutal, instincts, and to the intelligence." Again, "The barriers between the university and society have broken down. The undergraduate of today, far more generally than his predecessors, talks like a young worldling." The cause for these and many other differences between the society and youth of today and those of a generation or two ago is that the new world is forced upon us by scientists and inventors. The automobile alone has broken down the isolation of the college from the world outside. Add the long-distance telephone and the radio, and it is no cause for wonder that life, especially for the young, has become mobile and fluid. "It is much less centered in the home and much less centered in the college; it is much less localized and much less easily supervised. . . ."

These are simple words, and words about a matter that is sufficiently obvious. Yet they go to the spot of the problems of higher education in a way which many elaborate discussions of university questions fail to do. Dean Gauss has deliberately abstained from touching the issues of college curricula and college methods of instruction, save as they incidentally affect the life of the undergraduate who comes for discipline or advice into a dean's office. But he suggests, I think, the only promising and intelligent approach to these larger problems. He has made it clear that the life of the college as lived from day to day cannot be isolated from that of the home and its social setting. I believe that no great light will dawn on the educational problems of the college until they, too, are considered, fully and frankly, in the context of American life.

JOHN DEWEY.

Whistler and His Friends

Whistler, by James Laver. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. 308 pages. $5.

Whistler: The Friend, by Elizabeth Robins Pennell. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 183 pages. $3.

OF THESE two books on Whistler, Mr. Laver's is the more important. Mrs. Pennell has, as is apparent in the title, a purpose apart from the mere presentation of a man's life; Mr. Laver has not. This does not mean that the former colors the facts in order to make her subject more attractive as a human being, but she does quite definitely, and frankly, put Whistler's best side forward—something which Whistler himself may have done when the Pennells were around, but not very consistently with anyone else.

As Mr. Laver's book indicates, Whistler developed the art of being inconsiderate to a fine point. Nothing was too much trouble for him if there was some possibility of its resulting in putting someone out. The lucky part was that most of Whistler's friends seem to have taken a somewhat masochistic pleasure in being imposed upon; they went to his house for dinner and waited two hours after the appointed time while the great man took a bath and dressed as slowly as possible; they let him talk about himself in the third person; one of them failed to have him arrested when he deliberately made an offensive job out of some house decoration he had been commissioned (by this friend) to do. Whistler lived up to the edge of his charm and for a time all went well. As he grew older, he overdid it, and on several occasions made lifelong enemies out of old friends. The Legros affair is an example. According to Mr. Laver, they quarreled, presumably over a woman. Whistler made an accusation, Legros gave him the lie, Whistler hit him in the face, and Legros never spoke to him again. Mrs. Pennell says she knows the cause of the quarrel, but won't tell it, and "cannot but think the fault lay largely with Legros." At any rate, even Mrs. Pennell's Whistler is an extremely high-handed fellow, moody, feminine, capricious; her book might better have been called "Mrs. Pennell: The Friend."

Mr. Laver, however, is by no means a detractor of Whistler, either as man or artist; like Mrs. Pennell, he shows the attractive side of Whistler as well. And Whistler could be extremely attractive: he was generous, hospitable, full of vitality and, above all, fond of his fellow men—no

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

matter how often he quarreled with individuals. He scarcely ever read; human society was essential for him; he liked having people around even while he painted. He was courageous, not only in the physical sense but in the sense of always being willing to live up to his esthetic convictions—whether that meant wearing funny clothes or substituting form and color for anecdotal or realistic composition in painting. It is difficult, in Whistler's personal life, to say where he was being a charlatan and trying to impress people and where he was acting in accordance with genuine, if eccentric, principles of his own. Mr. Laver does not try to pass judgment, either pro or con; he gives the facts, interestingly, convincingly, and lets the reader form his own opinion. Even when he tells of Whistler's naughtiest behavior, he refrains from administering a spanking. This is an excellent biography, and while we are in this expansive mood we advise you to read Mrs. Pennell's book also—as long as you promise to discount that personal bias of hers.

GEOFFREY T. HELLMAN.

The Chinese Dilemma

China: The Collapse of a Civilization, by Nathaniel Peffer. New York: The John Day Company. 306 pages. $3.50.

CHINA is in population and extent a continent comparable to Europe as a whole rather than to a European nation; it houses nearly a quarter of humanity; it has lived, until the present, under the oldest continuous civilization in the world; it must now, by the pressure of events, find new livelihoods for its people, a new political structure and new social institutions. If one can imagine the four hundred million people of China migrating en masse to the West, one can appreciate the overwhelming problems of adjustment by which it is faced. If one considers the sheer weight of the movement of so large a population and so large a portion of the earth towards industrial civilization, one can understand its importance in international affairs.

The civilization which has collapsed and is now being replaced was, until the middle of the eighteenth century, an admirable one. In the security of self-respect that it afforded its common citizens, it was superior to Europe. In some of its arts and conventions it was also superior. It would take a biased chooser to declare a positive preference. Its form of government, theoretically a monarchy, affected its people less, perhaps, than any other government in the world. The emperor and his court were symbols. An exceptionally vigorous or an exceptionally depraved monarch might make himself felt; in the latter case he roused the people to revolt, and revolt had almost the sanction of an institution. The effective government was local; its political form was village government, and since the village was usually a family enlarged to its limits of kinship, it was basically government by the elders of the family. Its economic form was the guild, which included both workmen and employers, settled all disputes, regulated prices, and thus established a security and stability which the West with its chronic unemployment might well envy. The standard of living secured by these institutions was low rated by our standards; but it was probably higher than the standards possible in the West before the industrial revolution.

At the time the West first established contact with China, the empire was self-centered. It believed itself to be the middle of the world. Officially it claimed world dominion and it received embassies as bearers of tribute. Economically it was self-contained, and when trade with the West began it had no use for Western products. For China it was a matter of sale rather than exchange, and the West poured in its silver until its opium provided a means to establish a balance.

The inventions of the nineteenth century furnished the economic motives and the military means for the imperial expansion of the West. Then began the dissolution of the Chinese empire. The stupidity of the Manchu court matched the cupidity of the Western nations. Embarrassed by revolt within, the empire was less able to defend itself without. Only the jealousies and the wranglings of the Western powers, climaxed by their exhaustion after the World War, saved China territorially.

But the contact had brought more than warships and garrisons from the West. Commerce, and ideas, outran them. The new ideas destroyed the political and social institutions; the industrial revolution destroyed the guilds. Chinese civilization went under. The question is: Will China improvise a new civilization borrowed from the West, create a new civilization of its own, or exist as an enormous proletariat without cultural personality, like the Egyptian people in the last twenty-five hundred years?

At this question, Mr. Peffer's book, which I have attempted to synopsize in the preceding paragraphs, stops short. He offers no answer, but I believe he is unduly pessimistic in stating the dilemma. I cannot believe that the destruction of China's civilization is so drastically complete as he pictures it. Elements of civilization have powers of adaptation and survival that are not recognized till centuries afterwards. Pagan civilization in Europe may still be detected fifteen hundred years after its presumed extinction. Moreover, China is too multiform to be destroyed. A small people living within limited climatic and geographical conditions and practising a limited economy might experience conditions too adverse for survival. But China is, after all, a continent; racially it is made up of a number of stocks differing in capacities and temperament. Mr. Peffer does not count this in; yet it is the outstanding factor in China's chances for survival.

In presenting the situation in which China finds herself today Mr. Peffer is masterly. I doubt whether the qualities of Chinese civilization have ever before been summed up so tersely and so comprehensively, and with an understanding so resistant to prejudice.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Book Notes

BIOGRAPHY

THE FRIEND OF SHELLEY: A Memoir of Edward John Trelawny, by H. J. Massingham. *New York: D. Appleton and Company. 368 pages. $3.50.*

A valuable footnote to the history of the Shelley circle at Pisa and to the circumstances of Shelley's death. Despite the fact that Mr. Massingham is dazzled if not blinded by his own portrait of Shelley as a Christian ideal, he explains with admirable clarity the unfortunate relationship of Trelawny to Mary Shelley and Byron. One is convinced that the author has sufficient proof to claim that Byron contributed to Trelawny's disintegration by giving him an inferiority complex, and that Mary Shelley and Trelawny had nothing in common beyond a mutual worship of Shelley's genius. However, one scarcely blames either Byron or Mrs. Shelley for treating this celebrity hunter and raconteur with a great lack of respect.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK, by Nelson Frederick Adkins. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 461 pages. $5.*

Whatever value this study of Fitz-Greene Halleck has for the general reader is contained in its review of the influence exerted by the romantic movement in England upon American poetry of a hundred years ago. Mr. Adkins' history of the period that produced "The Croaker Papers" and their authors, Joseph Rodman Drake and Fitz-Greene Halleck, is an excellent example of thoroughly academic research. The volume is fully documented and indexed, and could be used to advantage in any further consideration of the Knickerbocker period in American literature.

THE THREE VIRGINS OF HAWORTH, an Account of the Brontë Sisters, by Emilie and Georges Romieu. Translated by Roberts Tapley. *New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 230 pages. $3.*

Charlotte Brontë's frustrated love for M. Heger is made the center of interest in this novelized biography of the three Brontës. Following the example of André Maurois in "Ariel," this book is obviously written for entertainment rather than literary interpretation or biographical research. The familiar story of the Brontë sisters, with their tragic and romantic background, moves forward at a satisfactory pace, and is, on the whole, effectively told. One forgives occasional lapses into sentimental attitudes and poetizing on the part of the authors for the sake of a well organized and swiftly moving narrative.

WASHINGTON: COMMANDER IN CHIEF, by Thomas G. Frothingham. *Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 389 pages. $5.*

Captain Frothingham's primary concern is with Washington as a military man, as generalissimo of the first Army of the United States. He begins with the assumption that Washington was a great general, and seems quite willing to let his eyes be blurred to the Virginian's worst defects. He shows where Howe wallowed in error, but he excuses Washington's bad strategy by saying that the pressure of the times was back-breaking. One hardly knows what the pressure of the times had to do with holding Harlem Heights; but probably this belongs to the more occult branches of military science. Captain Frothingham is unnecessarily hard on Charles Lee, who was probably mad; and when he comes to Arnold, his grasp of neurotic temperaments descends to zero. The book, as a whole, contributes no new material and no very original criticisms. More and more it seems that Rupert Hughes has made all further books on Washington superfluous for a long time to come.

Science

BIOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES, a Critical Study, by J. H. Woodger. *New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 498 pages. $7.*

A recent publication in the International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method, the general editor of which is C. K. Ogden. The author finds that biology has been "too eager to press on to startling 'conclusions' rather than to devote critical attention to the purification of its concepts and making more sure of its foundations." He holds that every natural science has three aspects: the investigatory aspect, which is concerned with discovery; the speculative aspect, which seeks to systematize into theories the knowledge furnished by investigation, and the critical aspect, "which has to do with investigating methods of interpretation from the standpoint of logic and epistemology." It is with the third aspect that he is concerned, showing how metaphysical and psychological elements have affected the generalizations of the biologists. His book should serve to bring biology to that rigorous stage of self-questioning which has already appeared among the physicists. It should greatly assist in that process of purification by which the critical-minded scientists are refining the arrant assumptions of their more salesman-like colleagues; it illustrates once again how science may rectify itself by the extension of its own methods, its objectionable features having been due to the fact that scientists were not scientific enough—and for such reasons the book might well be studied not only by the proudest of our empiricists, but also by that growing horde of religionists who would give vent to their impatience by advocating a flat return to pre-scientific theology as the only "way out."

STUDIES IN THE LITERATURE OF NATURAL SCIENCE, by Julian M. Drachman. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 487 pages. $4.*

A readable discussion, for the educated layman, of the books about natural science written since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Mr. Drachman deals in a general way with the influence of scientific discovery—in particular Darwin's "Origin of Species"—on current opinion and philosophy. The volume is embellished with illustrations, a questionnaire, an extensive bibliography and an index.

History

SINCE THEN, by Sir Philip Gibbs. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 469 pages. $3.75.*

This journalistic account of events in Europe and America since the Armistice is colored by the author's personal likes and dislikes, which were developed largely through association with contemporary political leaders. His own unofficial share in certain undertakings—notably in the abortive Genoa Conference of April, 1922—gives the book immediacy and makes it interesting as supplementary reading. As history, it is no more impartial or scientific than the average newspaper story. The last chapter touches briefly on the mood of disillusion in post-war literature, and ends with a rather sanguine mention of the Boy Scout movement as the symbol of a new international amity.

Public Affairs

THE TURN TOWARD PEACE, by Florence Brewer Boeckel. *New York: The Friendship Press. 214 pages. Paper, $.60; cloth, $1.*

A clear and simple handbook of "the peace movement," by one who has more confidence in the efforts of the professional pacifists than is probably possessed by most readers of The New Republic. Sensible chapters on the causes of war and the existing machinery for settlement of international disputes.

WHAT RIGHTS ARE LEFT? by Henry Alan Johnston. *New York: The Macmillan Company. 177 pages. $2.*

A member of the New York Bar, a Wet in sympathy, summarizes for the layman the legal statement and practice of prohibition. Various court cases are cited, by way of illustrating the present confusion over the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act, and encouraging a more exact and uniform interpretation. The author also sets forth the conditions under which the individual may claim redress for search or arrest, and appends an annotated copy of the Constitution.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford, the British journalist, has during the past few months been investigating conditions in India at first hand. He is now visiting this country to deliver a series of lectures on international affairs.

Louis Stark is a specialist on labor and industry for one of the New York dailies.

Katherine Anne Porter is the author of "Flowering Judas," a volume of short stories which appeared during last fall. She is at present in Mexico City writing a novel.

Robert Hallowell, the well known artist, was treasurer of The New Republic from its founding until 1925.

Kenneth Burke, the author of "White Oxen," is now at work preparing a series of studies in esthetic principles.

Hildegarde Flanner is the author of "Time's Profile," a book of verse which appeared last fall.

John Dewey needs no introduction to readers of The New Republic. His most recent book was "Individualism, Old and New."

Geoffrey T. Hellman was on the editorial staff of The Miscellany.

Isidor Schneider, the author of "The Temptation of Anthony," is writing a new novel.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOK

"The Best Account of the Bolshevist Regime."—New York Times

SOVIET RUSSIA

By WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

Steadily gaining in popularity — recognized everywhere as the best book on its much-discussed subject:

Published April 4, 1930
Second printing, April 14th
Third printing, June 7th
Fourth printing, June 25th
Fifth printing, September 15th
Sixth printing, October 24th
Seventh printing, November 24th
Eighth printing, January 17th, 1931

12th thousand. $5.00 everywhere

LITTLE, BROWN & CO.
Publishers, Boston

LECTURES

THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE

AT COOPER UNION
8th Street and Astor Place, at 8 o'clock
Admission Free

Friday, Jan. 30
MR. HENRY HAZLITT
"Human Values."

Sunday, Feb. 1
MR. CLIFTON P. FADIMAN
"What Good Is Literature?"

Tuesday, Feb. 3
PROFESSOR KIMBALL YOUNG
"Science and Religion."

Muhlenberg Branch Library

209 West 23rd Street, at 8:30 o'clock

Monday, Feb. 2
DR. E. BOYD BARRETT
Modern Thinkers and Religion.
"Einstein, Millikan, Keith, Haldane."

Wednesday, Feb. 4
MR. CLIFTON P. FADIMAN
Shifts in the American Novel.
"Death of Gentility: Howells, James."

Thursday, Feb. 5
PROFESSOR E. G. SPAULDING
Problems in Systematic Philosophy.
"What is Logic?"

Saturday, Feb. 7
DR. V. J. McGILL
Contemporary Philosophers and Their Doctrines.
"Toward a Strict Science of Philosophy."

DISCUSSION

THE GROUP

A Clearing House of Opinion
Meets at Auditorium—150 W. 85th St.
Tuesday, February 3rd, at 8:30 P. M.
JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
will speak on:
"THE EVILS OF PRESENT-DAY PSYCHOLOGY"

Sunday Afternoon Discussion Group
February 8th, at 4:30 P. M.
SEYMOUR SELIGSON
will speak on:
"WILL THE MORON OR THE SUPERHUMAN SURVIVE"

INVESTMENT COURSE

Elementary Survey Course
Investment Opportunities in Railroads, Public Utilities, Certain Industrial Corp.
Wednesday evening, 7:30-9:00, Feb. 4.
Thursday morning, 11:00-12:30, Feb. 5.
12 Lectures. Fee, $15.00.
Clara I. Taylor—Investment Counselor, 551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St., Fifth Floor.

COTTAGE WANTED

If you are traveling this summer and wish to rent your summer cottage in eastern Canada or Maine, at moderate price to two professional women, address: Box 560, The New Republic.

MAGAZINES

INDIA TODAY AND TOMORROW SERIES

Edited by HARIDAS T. MUZUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D.
Gandhi's Companion on the March to the Sea. Author of "Gandhi the Apostle," etc.

No. 1. INDIA'S NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTION
No. 2. PESHAWAR: THE EPIC STORY OF MEN VERSUS MACHINE GUNS
No. 3. THE BREAKDOWN OF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
No. 4. THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE
No. 5. THE UNITED STATES OF INDIA

INDIA'S NON-VIOLENT REVOLUTION, by Dr. Muzumdar, just off the press, is destined to be an epoch-making volume. It portrays the personality of Mahatma Gandhi and graphically describes India's "Battle for Freedom." 25 cents per copy; 5 copies for one dollar.

To make sure of your full set of the five volumes, promptly send in a dollar to:

INDIA TODAY AND TOMORROW SERIES
20 Vesey Street New York, N. Y.

A copy of India's Declaration of Independence will be mailed free to all our subscribers.

From the Heart of the Continent
Not Published in New York
"Present-Day American Literature"
A magazine published monthly
from October to May
A perspective.
Price, one dollar a year.
Sample on request.
Montgomery, West Virginia

FOR RENT

West 12th Street, near Fifth Avenue, 7 room apartment, two baths; elevator. Will rent at half of regular rental until September 1st. Address H. L. B., The New Republic

At 300 West 109 Street, near Riverside, by professional woman, large, light room, $9. References. Telephone: Academy 2, 2972.

STUDIO APARTMENT, sublet, Brooklyn Heights, 8 minutes Wall Street, 20 minutes Times Square; artistic but comfortable, complete, substantial; 2 rooms, bath, kitchen, all ample. Very reasonable. Call Main 4-0402 any time.

BOOK BARGAINS

We have in stock one or more copies of the books listed below, unused and showing almost no shelf wear.

	Our Price
RE-DISCOVERY OF AMERICA by Waldo Frank. Scribner. List $3.00	$1.60
QUEEN ELIZABETH, by Katherine Anthony. Knopf. List $4.00	2.00
AMERICA SET FREE, by Count Hermann Keyserling. List $5.00	2.60
NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER, by Richard Halliburton. Bobbs List $5.00	2.60
AFTER MOTHER INDIA, by Harry Field. Harcourt. List $3.50	1.75
TO THE PURE, by Morris L. Ernst and William Seagle. Viking. List $3.00	1.50
EVERY SOUL IS A CIRCUS, by Vachel Lindsay. Macmillan. List $2.75	1.40
DANCE OF THE MACHINES, by Edward J. O'Brien. Macaulay. List $2.50	1.25

Postage Free

NEW REPUBLIC BOOKSTORE
419 W. 21st St., New York City

TRAVEL

33 days EUROPE $255

Foremost Student Tours, All Expenses
20,000 satisfied members. Small parties. First class hotels. More motor travel. 250 tours, 26 days $235 to 104 days $890. Seven-country tour $345.
Send for Booklet
COLLEGE TRAVEL CLUB
580 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK

AROUND COOL SOUTH AMERICA THIS SUMMER — $800

This untrodden continent awaits you. Pleasure. Culture. Economy. 9000 miles sea travel. 1300 miles rail deluxe. 19 colorful cities. Two glorious months. All inclusive. Write for Folder W.
1st Class THRUOUT
PACIFIC ERA TRAVELS, INC.
307 Crary Bldg., Seattle 112 E. 19th St., New York

LANGUAGES

FRENCH, SPANISH,

ITALIAN, GERMAN, RUSSIAN

Conversational method. Carefully selected Native teachers. Private lessons, 75c, short course, 9 to 9 daily, 18th year.

FISHER'S SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES
1264 Lexington Avenue, N. W. Cor. 85th St.

Russian

taught by university man, instructor in Russian at the Berlitz School. Victor records used. Michael Jeritzyn, 3 West 122nd Street. Tel. Harlem 7-5368.

FRENCH BY EAR

Learn 400 common French words with marvelous 10" phonograph disc and French-English book. Electrically recorded by Prof. Ettiene of Paris. See and hear. Pay only $1.98 and postage on arrival for disc and book. Limited supply. Order now. Money back guarantee. Spanish disc, $1.98; English disc, $1.98. **AUTOMATIC RECORD INSTITUTE, 1928-CK, Tribune Bldg., 154 Nassau Street, New York, N. Y.**

GENERAL

BACK NUMBER WANTED

The New Republic would like to repurchase several copies of the September 28, 1927, issue and will appreciate hearing from subscribers who can supply one or more copies.

REAL HARRIS TWEED

The aristocrat of all outdoor wear—direct from makers. Sample free
Suit-lengths by Mail. Carriage Paid.
JAMES St. TWEED DEPOT
159 Stornoway, Scotland.

Writers or What-Not

If, without being wholly impecunious, you're feeling the strain of "skimping" in town, or if "Hard-luck" stories are getting on your nerves, why not live well and soothingly with stimulating companionship in delightful steam-heated colonial country house? Nourishment for body and spirit, home surroundings conducive to creation, beautiful Connecticut country-side—all to be had for $20 a week. Week-end guests also accepted. Address: Box 556, The New Republic.

BOARD FOR CHILDREN

Loving care and excellent training given to young child of good heritage by women of experience. Entire charge assumed if desired. Christian. R. F. D., Box 96, Sharon, Mass.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED